No. 3 ☐ **$2.75** ($3.75 in Canada)

Recommended for mature readers

HONK!

INSIDE THE MIND OF
HUNT EMERSON

PLUS J.R. WILLIAMS, PHIL ELLIOTT, EDDIE CAMPBELL, BOB BOZE BELL, GLENN DAKIN, J.D. KING, BRIAN JAMES RIEDEL, MARC HEMPEL, and RIAN HUGHES.

MATT GROENING
INTERVIEW IN
HELL

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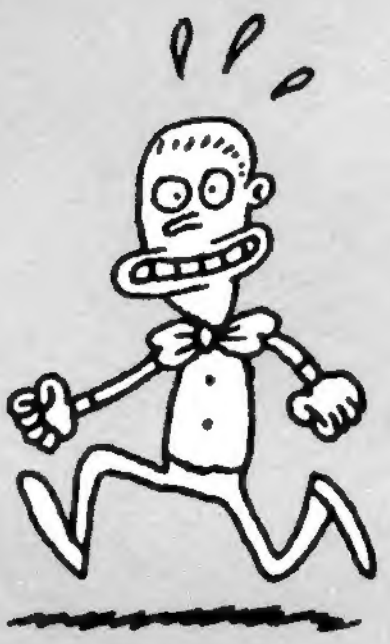

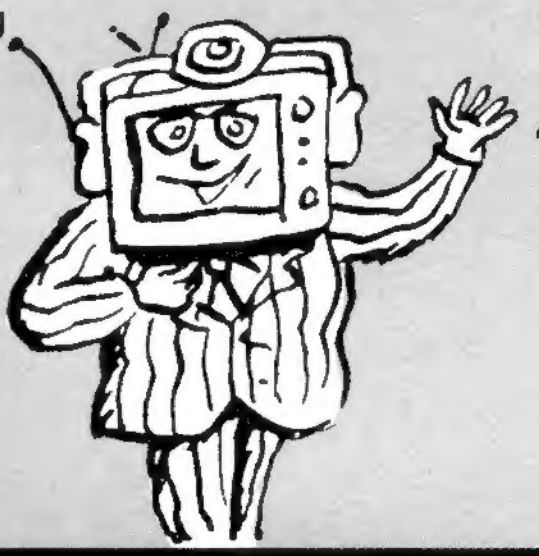

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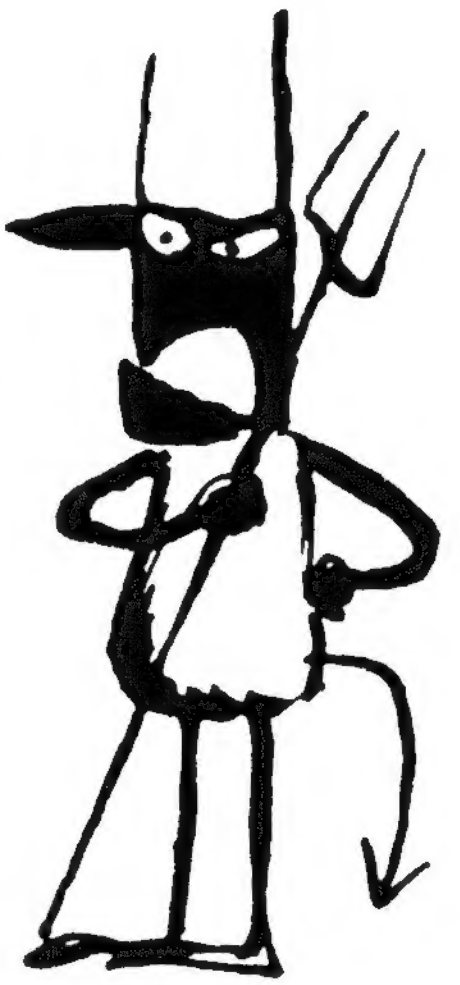

STAFF

EDITOR
Tom Mason

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Andrew Christie
Kim Thompson
Mark Waid

DESIGN
See EDITOR

LOGO DESIGN
Gary Fields

PROMOTION
Joe Sacco

CIRCULATION
Rachel Enger

TYPESETTING
Linda M. Gorell
Arlene Easter

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Port Publications

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DARK DESIGN

... AND BUY UP ALL HER AVAILABLE WORKS - SKETCHES, EVERYTHING. I WANT THIS MARKET CORNERED... IF YOU DO YOUR JOB PROPERLY HER LIFETIME'S OUTPUT COULD REST WITH US

MR. HEISMANN WILL SEE YOU NOW, SIR — IF YOU'D LIKE TO MEET HIM IN THE GALLERY...

RECEPTION

JOHN... ABOUT MY SHOW...

AHHH, JERRY. BEFORE WE START THIS DISCUSSION, YOU REALISE FINANCIAL HELP FROM ME DEPENDS ON SEVERAL CONDITIONS

...INCLUDING FIRST OPTION ON ALL WORKS YOU MAY PRODUCE UNDER MY SPONSORSHIP.

YOU UNDERSTAND THE POSITION?

JOHN, I NEVER DID LIKE YOUR TERMS, BUT I REALLY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY CHOICE. THE COST OF MATERIALS ALONE...

...BUT WITH NO BACKING, THERE WILL BE NO SHOW.

IT'S A DEAL

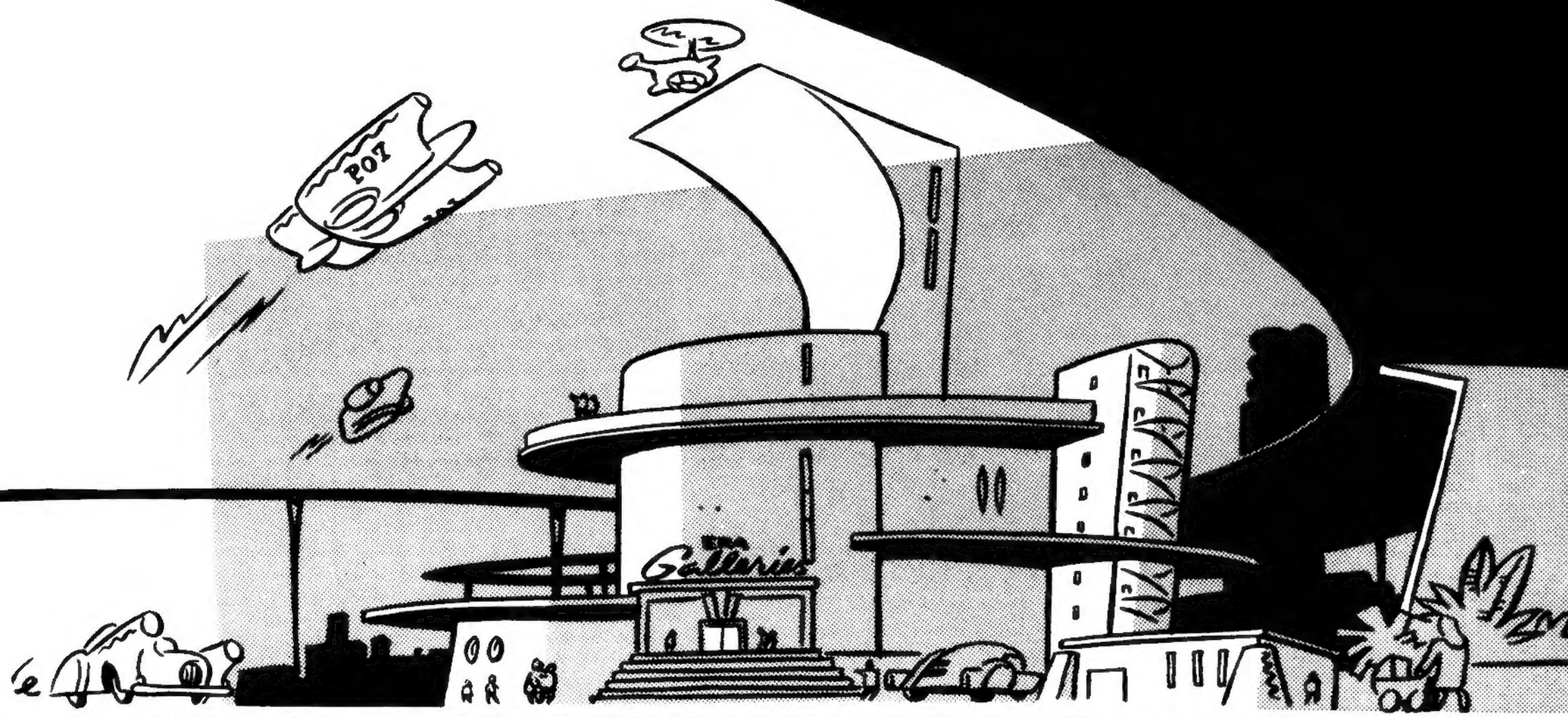
WELL, INEZ? HOW MUCH IS HE WORTH TO US?

BEFORE THE SHOW, NOT A GREAT DEAL, I'M AFRAID

BUT I'VE LOOKED INTO THIS QUITE THOROUGHLY, SIR— AFTER, THERE'S A POSSIBLE 200% INCREASE IN THE VALUE OF HIS WORK

AND AFTER POSSIBLE TERMINATION?

HARD TO TELL—BUT WELL OVER 800%


POZ
Galleria

EMMA, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET THE PERSON WHO MADE THIS SHOW POSSIBLE
MAGNIFICENT, JERRY! I LIKE IT!
AND AFTER A SUCCESSFUL OPENING NIGHT...
I DON'T LIKE IT, JERRY...

YOU'RE NO STAR- WHY SHOULD HE CHOOSE TO BACK YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE?
YOU KNOW I'VE REALLY NO IDEA! PERHAPS HE JUST HAS MORE FAITH IN ME THAN YOU SEEM TO HAVE

HANG ABOUT- I'M SURE THAT'S HEISMANN'S SECRETARY BEHIND US

PERHAPS YOU LEFT SOMETHING IMPORTANT

JERRY! WHAT THE HELL IS SHE =-

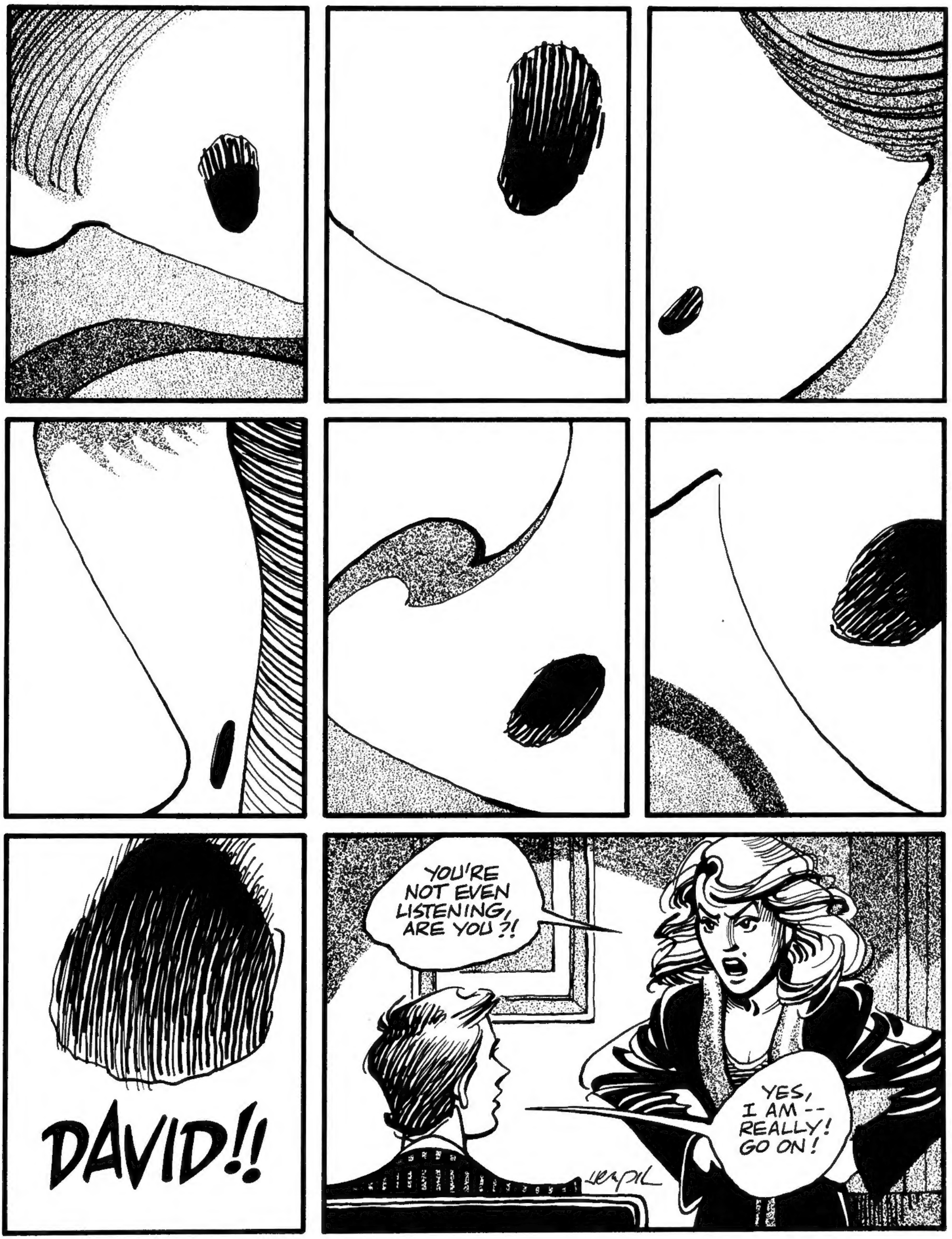
...FIRST ON THE SCENE? EXCELLENT, INEZ

I'D SAY WELL OVER 950% PROFIT OVER COSTS, SIR...

... WHAT WITH SALEABLE WORKS BEING EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD IN THIS CASE

Brian Hughes ©

D I S T R A C T I O N



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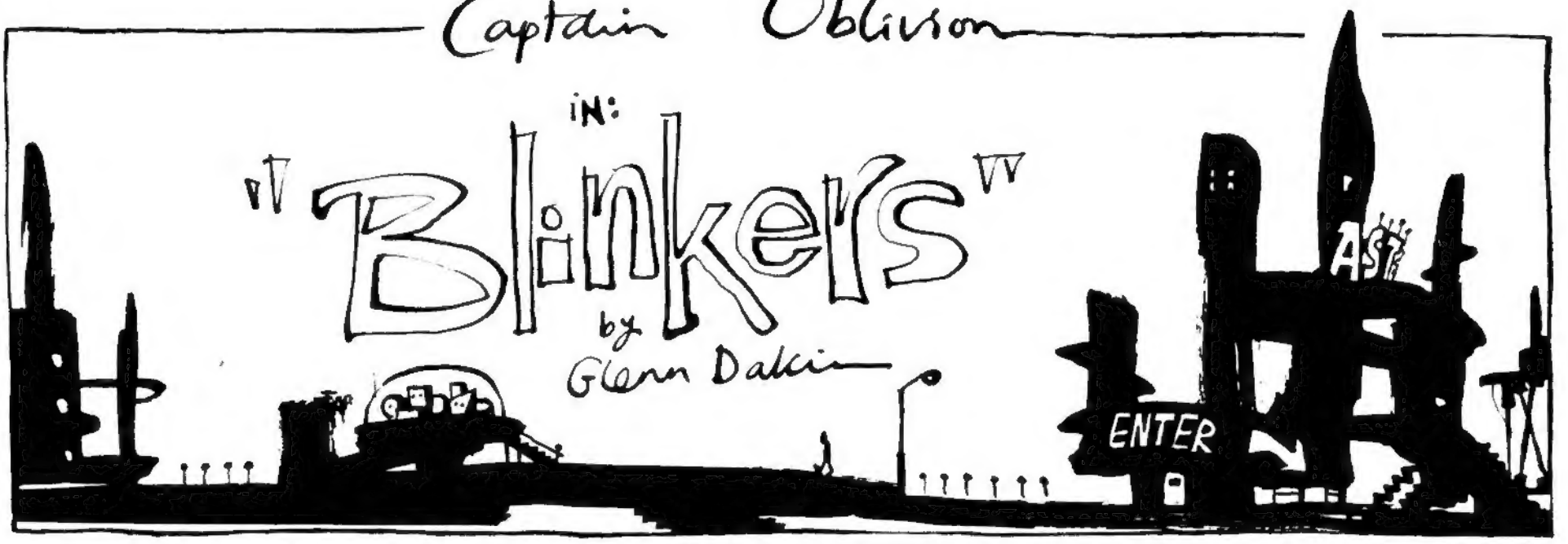
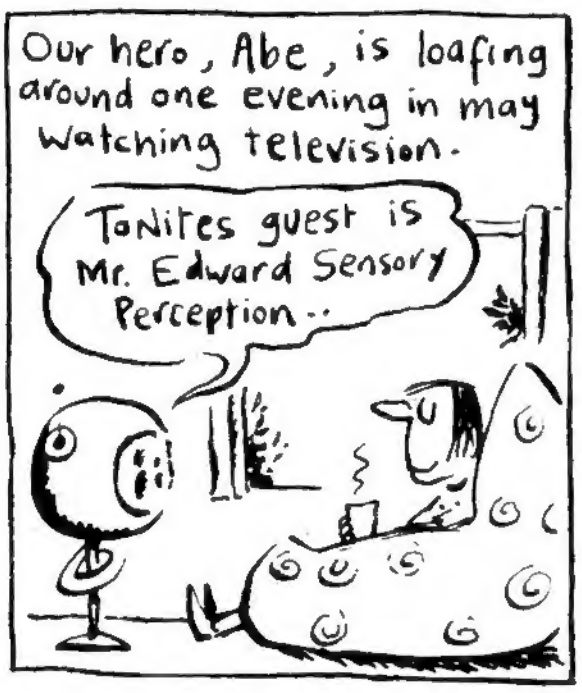
Captain Oblivion

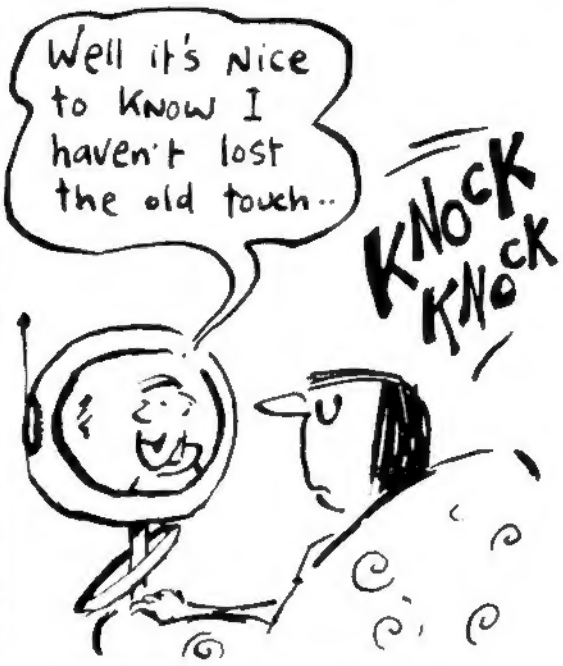
IN:

"Blinkers"

by Glenn Dakin







Hello.. Can I interest you in this pair of PsykoMatic "Blinkers" -?- enabling you to stick ruthlessly to ONE Narrow path in Life!
No thanks Pal

Of course - You do realise it's the chance of a Lifetime..

Get out and dont put them back on until You've at least two Miles away!

BOOT!

- Next day -

'Blinkers' - blimey that's all we need - people paying out money to have their Minds narrowed!

Yes but if you dont get distracted think of all the things You'd get done..

hah! since when has 'getting things done' benefited Mankind?

the best things normally happen by accident anyway..

Atlantis bar

..like meeting Alūnya - that was an accident - I met her while chasing after someone else - suppose I'd been wearing Blinkers then..

Alūnya is Abe's Martian girl-friend. He never stops going on about her.

Think I'll drop in on Muriel..

RING!

oh hello Abraham! I've just finished My thesis -

Fivehundred and sixty seven pages - I've really got down to it Isn't it marvellous?

Muriel!

You haven't fed your goldfish for so long he's evolved into a land animal and learnt to live off leaves!

THIS could have been a tragic piece of NEGLECT!

and every mistake nicely Tipp-Exed out.. It'll never show on the photocopy!

Even after a disillusioned youth of trying to change the World, Abe can still be tempted, on a sunny day like today, to take to the sky as Captain Oblivion!

Maybe these things balance out.. I mean, if Muriel had kept feeding him nicely, that fish would never have learnt to fend for itself..

Hey Captain!

Rodney Really - Fighter of Causes about town

Bad NEWS! Remember your enemy' Mr. Milton KEENZ'

He's back trying to turn us into a toy town again.. pushing for office as your 'Blinkered Candidate'

VOT
MR. MIL
FO
SECURI

Let's all be the same!

scarey isn't it?

He's the perfect politician - he never listens to anyone else and pushes through his own policies Completely blind to the CONSEQUENCES!

It's obvious 'Blinkers' are a MENACE- and you've got to do something!

I dont know- if you ask ME, people are pretty narrow minded ANYWAY.

if they DO take any notice of you it's a sort of CALCULATED INSINCERITY..

a word in your ear "Captain Oblivious"

EXCAYOOZ ME! I'M Doctor DEEPEND World FAMOUS SUPERVILLAIN- You might listen to ME when I talk to you-

Listen.. I gave up superheroing so I could stop associating with people like you..

Well how NICE!

"Blinkers" are the problem, Captain - a threat to you and me - they make life's aimless blunderers capable of achievements that obscure true genius..

beerend! After all these years - I've tracked you down!

ZAP

See what I mean? Unimaginative drones succeeding by sheer narrow persistence! We must combine forces to restore the natural order..

Why?

Mankind is always manufacturing problems. It's time it learnt from it's mistakes.

I heard the whole thing Doc"D"- and I'm with you all the way!

-Zoom!

Blinkers

but how will we get in?

It's okay - I'm the Manager..

WELCOME but KEEP - OUT -

Meanwhile, Abe is meeting Mr. Milton Keenz himself..

here you are, sir

a wife and two kids - that'll straighten you out.. it's what nine out of ten people want!

I trust I can depend on your vote?

Look.. I am not 'Nine out of ten People' - I'm ME - so keep out of my life!

Well.. Maybe this guy is a threat to our freedom and fun.. if only I could see what it's all leading to..

I've GOT it!

Hello.. Mr. Edward Sensory Perception?

Ah - Captain Oblivion - I've been expecting you.

Abe explains..

and so I thought with your powers..

oh I see.. it's something serious.

You see, I'M actually a complete FRAUD.. it's all a bluff. Really, I'm no use at anything. I never have been.

oh

Now I feel terrible .. look at me - Edward "the big let down" - Sensory "useless at everything" - Perception.

Well I'd better go and see what's happening..

Please - let me come too.. I'll try and help..

In the Factory..

I dont believe it - ALL that guff about stopping 'BLINKers' - and YOU invented them!

Well I AM a Supervillain

I just didn't realise the consequences.. I thought they would keep all the NUMBSKULLS safely IN their little ruts.. instead of going around lowering the quality of life..

It's TOO LATE Deepend!

I'M IN charge here NOW - this factory is my passport to political SUCCESS -

Don't think YOU CAN appeal to the loyalty of YOUR MEN - they HAVE NO loyalty.. ONLY the ONE NARROW idea OF MAKING 'BLINKers'..

idiots

YOU can try our NEWEST type.. BLINKers that come with a ready-MADE idea IN them.. to VOTE for ME!

VOTE

I like things when they work out all NICE and tidily!

There they are, Captain!

Captain OBLIVION! Well well..

THANK YOU for the warning.. NOW I CAN switch all my BLINKered MEN INTO 'VIOLENT defence'..

GRRR

THANKS Edward — Haven't you heard of the advantage of surprise?

..I was only trying to help out..

Now there's going to be a big fight.. and I try so HARD to avoid these situations.

yes

Come on down!

The sort of brawl ensues that gives comics a bad name..

KLIK!

OW!

It's no good - they're fighting with such single-minded fanaticism - they're UNbeatable!

Look at that! Doc Deepend's fighting like a madman!

HA HARRR

SHOOM

I designed this plant - I know it's weaknesses.. and that's put paid to your schemes you boring semi-detached boxhead!

Well Deepend, you amaze me. You certainly proved an open mind beats a closed one for determination and initiative!

au contraire..

Blinkers!

I might have known..

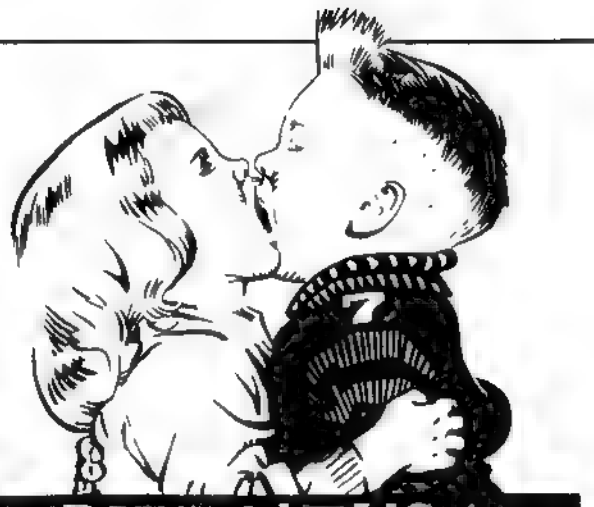
It was the only sensible thing to do.. fight fire with fire.. simple really.. and simplicity is genius!

What a HOLLOW victory..

Tell you what - let's all come back to my house for my speciality - "Mackeral bolognaise"

In the end it turns out that Edward is good at something, and his meal is a great success..

The END 31 5 85



Born in the U.S.A.

KIDSEX

Babies makin' babies

By Bob Boze Bell

The Facts of Life

• "In the course of a year, the average viewer sees more than 9,000 scenes of suggested sexual intercourse or innuendo on prime-time TV."

— *Time* magazine

• "Urban Americans are bombarded with 10,000 ads a day, screaming from billboards, newspapers, radio, TV and most of them promising or encouraging sex."

— Sexual marketing stats

• "Every day in the U.S.A., 3,000 teenagers get pregnant (thirty a day in Arizona)."

— Department of Health Services

• "Gee, couldn't we go back to the old days when sex was reserved for adults?"

— Every parent in the universe

• "Dream on, Tums-breath."

— Mr. Reality

Mama, Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up Before You Do

Today's Parents Have Five Choices:

1. Pretend that sex doesn't exist.

2. Pretend that everybody else is doing it except their kids.

3. Talk frankly and openly with their kids.

4. Count on someone else to talk frankly and openly with their kids.

5. Move to Jupiter.

Sexual Awakening Down Thru The Ages

Eons Ago

One Eon Ago

During Vietnam

Today

Since Your Parents Are Afraid to Talk to You And Your School's Hands Are Probably Tied, Here's Some Hard Facts

Myth — If you jump up and down real fast after sex, the sperm'll get mixed up and you won't get pregnant.

Fact — Sperm travels lickety-split. We're talking Mega Express. Once there, jumping up and down, douching, or urinating on the ceiling with gloves on will not prevent them from moving to the egg in the fallopian tubes.

Myth — Don't worry, I can't get pregnant the first time.

Fact — What are you going to name the baby?

Myth — If you're very careful about rhythm, it always works.

Fact — Tell that to a Catholic mother of ten kids.

Myth — You can't get pregnant during your period.

Fact — Yes, and Duran Duran is ugly. Wake up, there is no such thing as a safe period.

Myth — I can't get birth control, I'm under 18.

Fact — Wrong. If your parents are stupid enough to deny you access to birth control and you are under 18 you can get it on your own without parental consent. Call Planned Parenthood right now.

Babes in Boyland

Girls, take it from me — guys can be a real pain when it comes to controlling their rampant hormones. They'll say *anything* to get you to have sex. What follows are a few standard "lines" and a few suggested replies. Good luck.

When he says:	**You say:**
If you really love me, you'll go all the way.	*Okay, when I get there I'll write to you.*
Don't worry, I'll pull out.	*Here's your car keys, get going.*
I can't be a real man until I have sex.	*Don't worry, I can't be a real woman until I learn how to deflect goofy lines like yours.*
I'd use a condom, but they don't make rubbers my size.	Have you considered using them on your penis?

Photo: Ann Summa

CONFESSIONS OF

AN INTERVIEW IN HELL WITH MATT GROENING

By Kim Thompson

When Matt Groening (rhymes with "raining") appears on TV, he is usually introduced as a "cult cartoonist." In fact, Groening and his self-syndicated comic strip Life In Hell *are rapidly working their way out of the "cult" status and into the mainstream of American pop culture consciousness. Pantheon Books has recently released two handsome collections of the strip,* Love Is Hell *and* Work Is Hell, *while the weekly strip itself currently appears in 60 newspapers and weekly magazines.*

Arriving in Los Angeles almost ten years ago, the Portland, Oregon-born Groening put his initial reaction (i.e., revulsion) to the City of the Angels on paper. The inveterate doodler titled his satirical cartoons Life In Hell *and Xeroxed copies for his friends and relatives, selling some at local record stores as well. In 1978, the strip was picked up by the punkish* Wet *magazine, and in 1980, the newly formed newspaper* L.A. Reader *took over the feature, acquiring in the bargain the services of Groening as a staffer. (A member of a staff of three, Groening worked as associate editor, wrote a music column of sorts, and even delivered the papers for a while.) Eventually, his personal projects began to absorb most of his time; Groening set up his own syndicate, and* Life in Hell *moved to the* Reader's *main competitor, the* L.A. Weekly.

Over the years, Groening's strip has become an often hilarious compendium of the author's opinions and insights, starring a trio of neurotic and alienated rabbits, two fez-wearing gay midgets, and various hangers-on. Despite the occasional barb about Groening's somewhat basic art style (he himself refers to it as "uh. . . functional," and helps maintain its integrity by often drawing it from scratch on the morning of his deadline), no one disputes Groening's cutting and precise command of the language. It should come as no surprise that he considers cartooning an accidental sideline and, while loyal to the strip, plans to expand his work into other fields in the future.

Although virtually all of Groening's strips star rabbits, his back yard is a meeting place for several generations of ducks; some of the more recent arrivals can be heard peeping on his answering machine. This made the first question inevitable. . . —KIM THOMPSON

Thompson: *If you like ducks so much, why don't you put them in your strip?*
Groening: I've tried to draw them, but ducks are hard to draw (*laughs*). *That's* why. I've been working on it. Actually, there are some little ducks in my most recent strip, "Bongo's Dream House," which is a single panel of Bongo dreaming, with a sort of cut-away architectural drawing of a child's dream house—slides and a jukebox and a soda fountain and a secret submarine base—all the usual kind of stuff, like the Batcave.
Thompson: *But you like ducks? I mean, your back yard is thick with them.*
Groening: They came with the property. About a year ago, I moved from Hollywood to this neighborhood in Venice, where there are actual canals, full of the ugliest giant sea slugs that you've ever seen. These are canals that you would certainly not want to do your dishes in (*laughs*), although I think people do. Anyway, there were lots of ducks sitting around squawking, and when I moved into this house there was a duck living in the back yard. That duck laid some eggs and those are some of her kids. They've got it really good here—cracked corn, fresh water daily, and no sea slugs.
Thompson: *(Laughs) Do you have any particular affection for rabbits, as animals?*
Groening: No, not particularly. The reason I draw rabbits. . . I used to draw all sorts of animals back in high school. I drew a comic strip called "Tales of the Enchanted Forest," somewhat inspired by *Pogo* by Walt Kelly, but my bears didn't really look like bears, they looked sort of like big mice, and my mice looked like dogs, and people couldn't really tell what the dogs were. . . well, anyway, I had one rabbit character and they said, "Ah! A rabbit!" So that's why I stuck with rabbits; they're the easiest.
Thompson: *How did you come up with the idea of depicting Bongo, the child rabbit, with just one ear?*
Groening: Well, I had been drawing Binky the rabbit with two ears for several years and I wanted to give him an illegitimate son who would be the most alienated child in the world. I drew a number of prototypes for the son and I couldn't make the son look different enough from Binky so that people could tell them apart. Finally I hit on the idea of giving him one ear and it made me laugh out loud; I dared myself to use that character, and it's proven popular, although my mother thinks it's obscene.
Thompson: *Were you alienated as a kid—or just on the same level that any kid is alienated?*
Groening: I don't think I was all that much different from other kids, but yeah, I had a strong sense of alienation and a good memory and a penchant for self-pity and bitterness (*laughs*) that had to do with the fact that I was unable to sit there quietly while the teacher was droning on and on, and I passed the time by squirming and drawing. When the teachers confiscated my cartoons I was incapable of still keeping still so I drew on the desk and then I would get caught for drawing on the desk and the teacher would draw this circle in chalk on the blackboard and make me stick my nose on it. There was nothing I could do. There was no chalk within reach for me to draw; that's how I learned to blow bubbles off the end of my tongue. You can't put me in reach of anything. I taught myself, by having to stand in the corner near the window for some time, how to tie a hangman's noose,

All artwork © 1986 Matt Groening

which got me in further trouble. If you tie a hangman's noose with a venetian blind cord, I tell you, it's a one-way ticket to the principal's office (*Laughs*). (*In fact, the interviewee spent most of the interview toying with the venetian blind cord, although he never went to the extent of tying it into a hangman's noose.*)

Thompson: *I think that as kids, we all say to ourselves, "I'm going to remember this, and when I'm a grown-up I won't treat little kids this way"; it seems like everyone's forgotten but you.*

Groening: People have put it in the back of their minds. But yeah, it evokes a lot of memories. I was an extreme case, a smart kid and a smart-ass kid, so my big mouth got me in trouble quite a bit. And I had a couple of really rotten teachers who went out of their way to make the lives of kids miserable rather than just boring the way most teachers do. Because of that, when finally in the fifth grade I had a teacher that I felt was *so* horrible, I decided to keep a diary, because I suspected I was right even though the authorities told me I was completely wrong. So I kept the diary that year and yes, upon rereading it, I think I was right. I think there was no point in making me write a thousand-word essay on the life cycle of the liver fluke for whispering in the library. Anyway, that diary has also been good basic material. I ran an edited version of it in my strip for a number of weeks a couple of years ago, and that will be my next book: *School Is Hell*.

Thompson: *I guessed as much.*

Groening: Yeah. *School Is Hell* is going to be my major opus on that subject, although not my only one.

Thompson: *There are very few cartoonists who legitimately write from a kid's point of view.* Peanuts *is brilliant, but it's not about kids—*

Groening: Well, most traditional comic strips had so many taboos that they had to deal with —and also were a lot friendlier (*laughs*). If those strips hadn't been done I probably would be writing in that kind of style myself. But because they have been done, I try to offer an alternative. There's a darker side of childhood that I try to make people remember. People forget how frightened kids are of adults and teenagers and big dogs and failure and other kids and all the rest, and I like to write about that. Despite my problems with teachers and principals, though, I had a pretty idyllic childhood in many ways. I grew up in Portland, Oregon, in a neighborhood that was in the middle of a park bordering on an arboretum which had very exotic trees. My family lived a half a mile from the old Portland Zoo, which closed down when I was five years old; they just shut it down and locked the gate and so when I was a very young kid we used to play war games in the abandoned zoo, which was great. Most kids pretend to be in caves, but we got to run through the hillside and in the grizzly bear grotto, hide inside small grizzly caves, pretend the bones we found were real human bones, and actually swim in the bear pool, although that's probably almost as bad as swimming in these canals with the sea slugs.

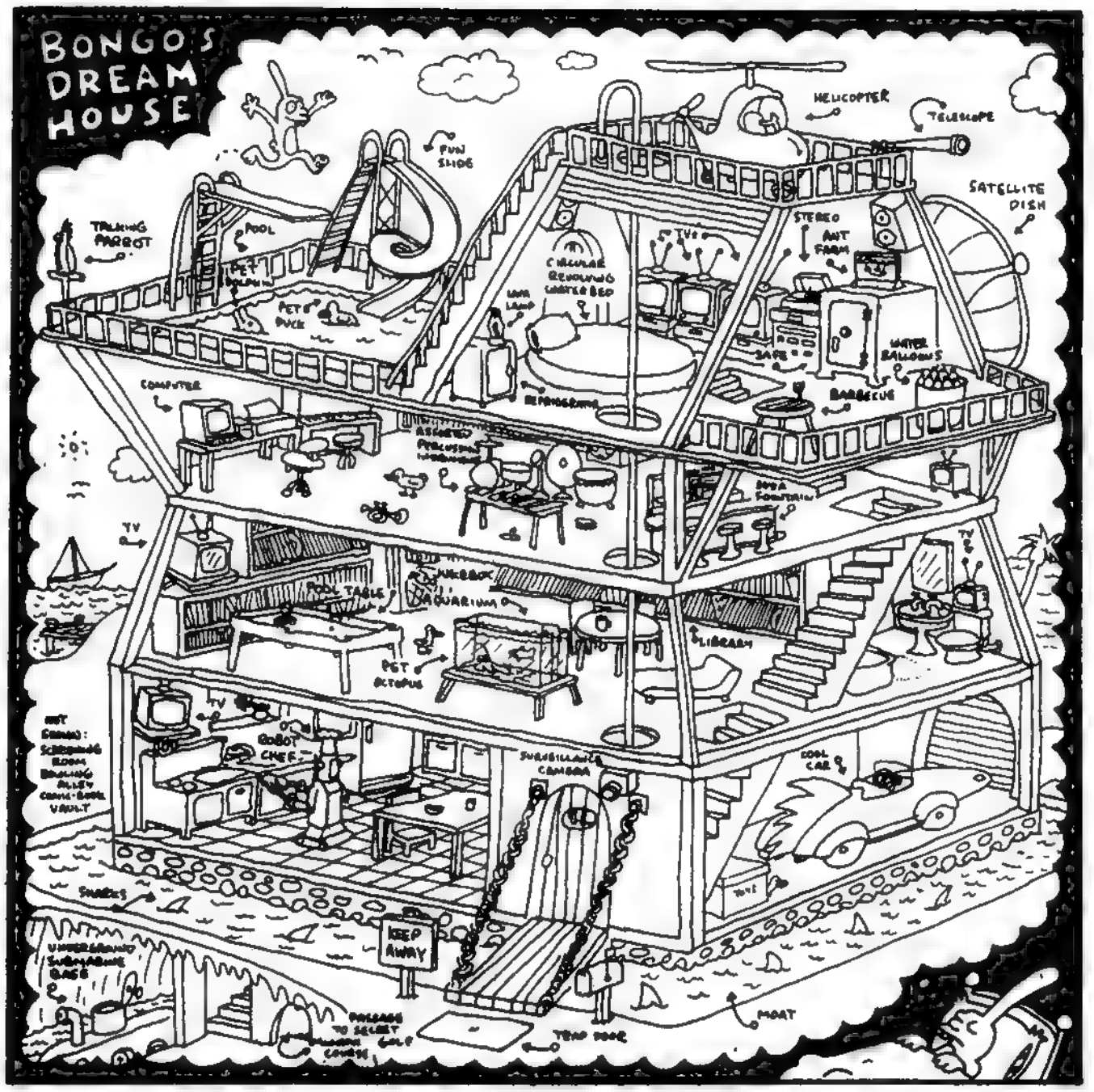
When I was in the fourth grade, my friends and I became obsessed with monsters. We bought the magazine *Famous Monsters Of Filmland* and saw on the back an ad for back issues, of which there were about 40 at the time. We made a club called the Creature Club. Its motto was "I'm Peculiar," a take-off on a cigarette slogan of the time, which was "I'm Particular." I don't remember what cigarette brand that was. Anyway, the dues of the club were as much money as you could get (*laughs*). . .

Thompson: *A communist at an early age.*

Groening: Right. The club treasury was stored in the bottom drawer of a kitchen of an abandoned house we called The Haunted House because it had a toilet that flushed without stopping. And so we saved up thirty dollars and we took a vote on whether to buy a print of *The Creature From the Black Lagoon* in 8 mm or all these back issues of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. We decided that the magazines would be better and we sent off for them; when they arrived they arrived in the mail one by one over a two-month period. They became a major part of our little afternoon rituals: laughing at these monster

LIFE IN HELL

©1986 BY MATT GROENING



A DOODLE-GOD

A jam strip done by Matt Groening and Gary Panter, with both writing and drawing. It was printed in a punk magazine and credited to "The Fuk Boys."

I don't think he wants to talk about it.
NO TALK NO SMOKE.
FARTZ
O.K. YOU FUCK I'LL TELL YOU..
Shoot
THIS BETTER BE GOOD!
POW! ANOTHER CAT.

ANOTHER COMIC
I'M GOING TO SCHOOL!
I'M UNLOCKING MY LOCKER!
I'M GOING TO CLASS!
I'M LISTENING TO MY TEACHER!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I...ER, I WAS JUST TELLING THE READER WHAT I WAS DOING....
WHAT? ARE YOU CRAZY?
WHAT READER?
WELL, THE ONE THAT'S READING THIS COMIC WE'RE IN....
HUH?!
YEAH....YOU SEE..
YOU'RE TRYING TO BE SMART!! GO TO THE OFFICE!
BUT-
GO!!!
I'M GOING TO THE OFFICE!
HEY.... WAIT A SEC! I'M GONNA LEAVE!!
I'M GOING TO THE BEACH!
I'M GOING SWIMMING!
THIS IS FUN!
HEY!! AN ISLAND!
A BEAUTIFUL GIRL!!
POP!
ONLY A DREAM...
I'M GOING TO SCHOOL!
Later....
WHERE?... WHERE AM I?!
YOU'RE IN THE BASE HOSPITAL SON! BUT YOU'VE GOT VERY BAD INJURIES!
YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO SHOOT WITH YOUR HANDS AGAIN!
YOU DON'T HAVE ANY!
HA! HA!

TOP: ***Another Comic*—Rapidograph on typewriter paper. Unpublished (1970).**
ABOVE: Excerpt from *Gross Comics*. Unpublished (1967).

magazines or laughing at the *Playboys* that we had also accumulated. That's what our two pieces of reading material were: *Famous Monsters* and *Playboy*. . .until some big kids broke into the Haunted House when we weren't there and stole the *Famous Monsters* and *Playboy*s and threatened to blackmail us by telling the principal that we had *Playboy*s in our possession.

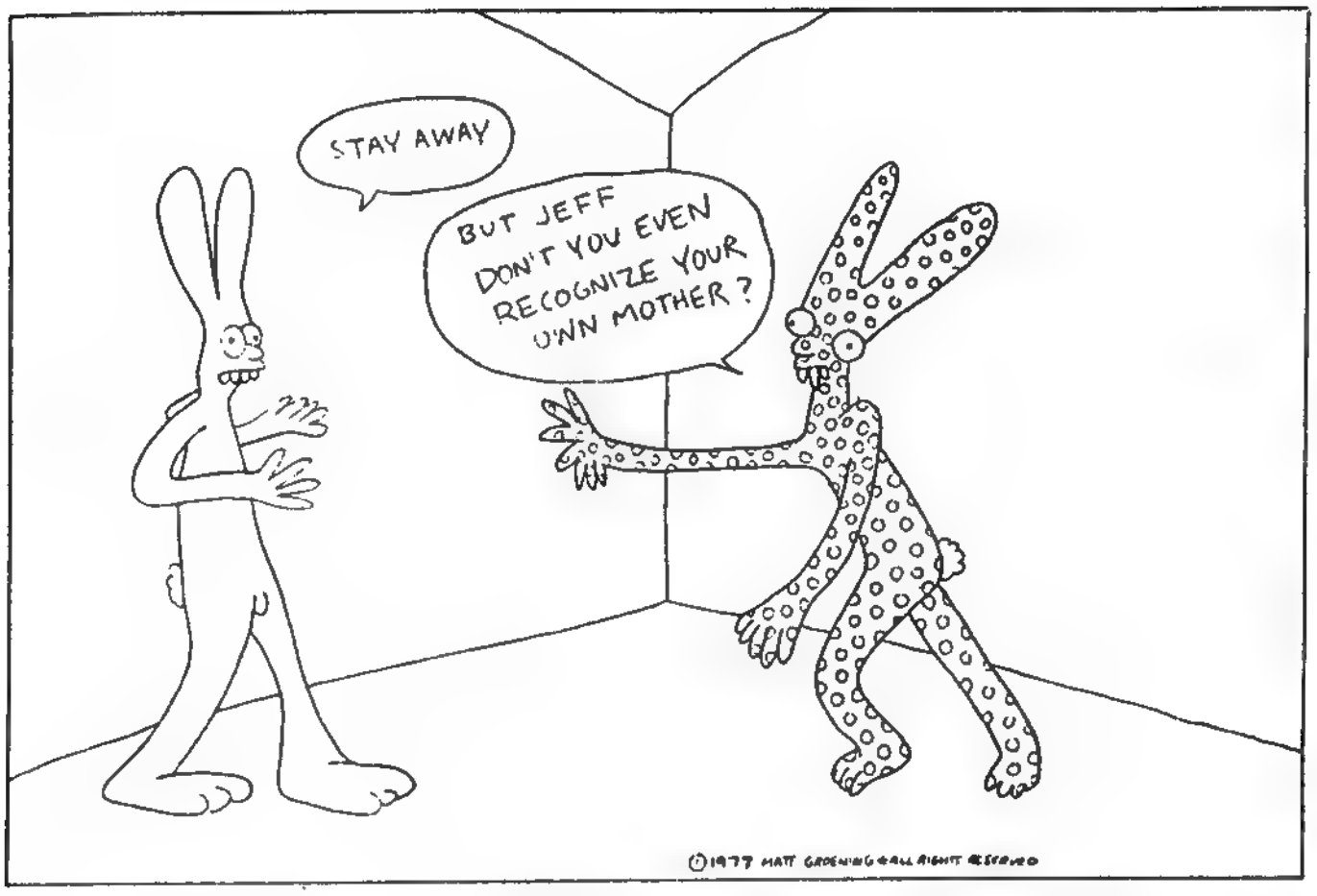
Thompson: *Was that the end of the club?*

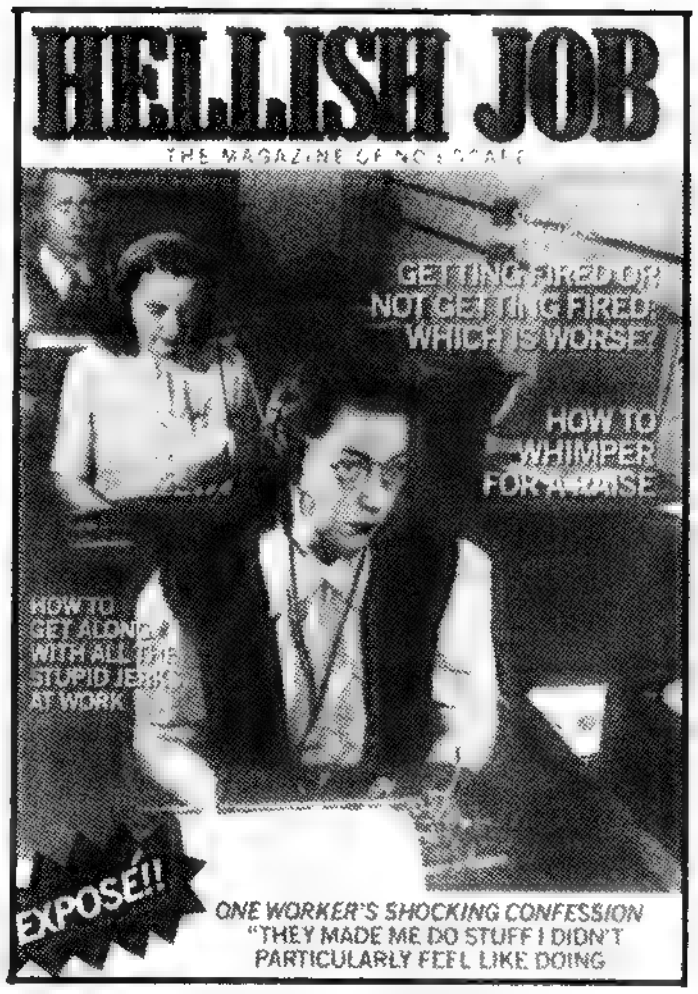
Groening: That was the end of that club. Also, by that time I had read, in *Time* or *Newsweek*, an interview with Forrest J. Ackerman that I had come across at random; they asked him about *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and he said, "Well, this magazine is made for little boys who are too old to play cowboys but are too young for girls." And right then the bubble was burst. . . all of a sudden, the limitations, the boundaries of that monster magazine were quite clear to me and I was no longer impressed with that kind of thing. In fact, that's my big problem with a lot of trash culture: I can see the boundaries in the audience for which it is intended and I feel like I'm not going to be surprised. For instance in so-called adventurous comics—you just know they're not going to go that far, that there are going to be boundaries, somewhere between PG and R, and I get bored with that.

Thompson: *That doesn't hold true for the undergrounds, though. I know you're a big fan of Crumb's.*

Groening: Oh, definitely. Yeah, Crumb is great. A few years after the monster magazines, the whole hippie movement started and I first discovered that in *Ramparts* magazine. My father is a filmmaker who also runs his own advertising agency and as a result my family received just about every general-interest magazine in the country for free. So while I was growing up I read everything from *Ebony* to *Esquire*, and I read *Punch* and *New Yorker* from the time I was a kid. I was influenced by those cartoons from way back as well as the cartoon collections that were in my parents' library, which were the only things that interested me before I could read—these cartoons of people like Ronald Searle and a guy named Rowland Emmett. They drew very complex cartoons for *Punch*.

My whole school career was a downhill slide from first grade on (*laughs*) through high school, as far as my attitudes toward school. I was a fierce believer in radical and progressive ideas about education so I would carry around copies of *Teaching as a Subversive Activity* hoping that a nifty girl would pop out of the crowd (*laughs*) and say "Yeah, I agree completely." Anyway, that didn't happen until I got to college, and went to a progressive school. I went to the Evergreen State College, in Olympia, Washington, which is a state-run school with no grades, no classes in the traditional sense, no football team, no fraternities, and, once you graduate, no jobs . . . but that's true of a lot of colleges. But anyway, it was a blast being there, because the distinctions between education and socializing were a little blurred. A class—they didn't call them classes, they called them seminars or some other buzzword—they were fun. And if you didn't like being there, the way most kids don't like being in school, there was no reason to be there, because you didn't have to; as a result, there were some




HELLISH JOB
GETTING FIRED OR NOT GETTING FIRED: WHICH IS WORSE?
HOW TO WHIMPER FOR A RAISE
HOW TO GET ALONG WITH ALL THE STUPID JERKS AT WORK
EXPOSE!!
ONE WORKER'S SHOCKING CONFESSION
"THEY MADE ME DO STUFF I DIDN'T PARTICULARLY FEEL LIKE DOING

ABOVE LEFT: "Stay Away" from *The Cooper Point Journal*, the campus newspaper of Evergreen State College, 1977.

ABOVE: A Matt Groening-Steve Vance greeting card.

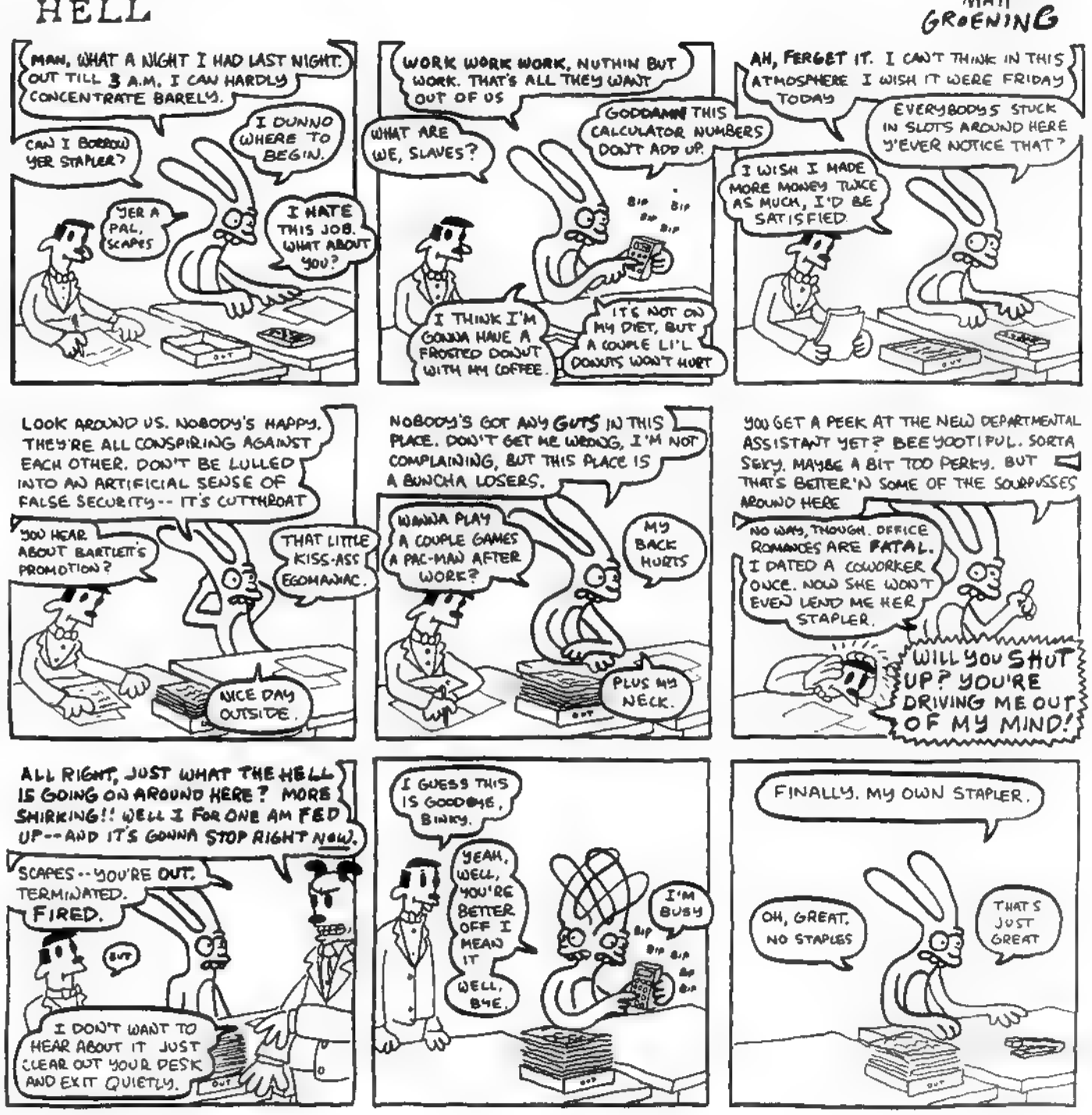
very motivated kids and I met a lot of extremely talented people.

I worked on the campus newspaper, called the *Cooper Point Journal*, and that was where I met Lynda Barry, the cartoonist; another cartoonist who cartooned at the same time is Charles Burns, who has since gone on to cartoon for *RAW* and *Heavy Metal* and is extremely popular in Europe; Steve Willis, who is very prolific and popular in the mini-comics movement. We were all working on the same school newspaper at the same time. None of us, except perhaps Charles, had any plans for continuing professionally, and it was by fluke that both Lynda and I continued after we graduated from school. She moved to Seattle, and I moved to Los Angeles, and independently of each other we both cartooned for small newspapers in our respective cities and gradually built up from there.

Thompson: *You two are sort of the twin heads of the alternative cartooning world: It's always "Matt-Groening-and-Lynda-Barry."*

Groening: Well, we decided a long time ago that we were going to do stuff together and not let our careers get in the way of our friendship, and we thought it was fun to mix our styles—not that rabbits and whatever those things that Lynda draws are (*laughs*) are exactly compatible. Also, the same things made us laugh. Meeting Lynda in college was a real breakthrough for me, because it was a real treat to find someone who thought very much like I did. She was very influential.

Lynda and I both sort of developed a market that didn't exist much before we became cartoonists. Underground papers were dead and in their stead had risen in large cities around the country the so-called alternative newspapers, most of which are free entertainment guides with a smattering of coverage of local politics and things like that. Those papers were ready to give up a little space to new cartoonists and we just happened to be coming along at the right time. So we were lucky. If we had tried to publish our own stuff and go through the comic book stores I think we would have been ignored completely. What we needed to do was to get in front of an audience that still considers cartoons kid's stuff and sneak up on them in the classifieds sections, which is just fine with me. I think most cartoons are strong when they are considered peripheral to whatever the main publication is. I think it's going to be a tough haul to make Americans go into a comic book store and walk out with a comic book under their arm. It's not quite as bad as pornography these days. . .


FILE IN HELL
©1983 BY MATT GROENING
MAN, WHAT A NIGHT I HAD LAST NIGHT. OUT TILL 3 A.M. I CAN HARDLY CONCENTRATE BARELY.
CAN I BORROW YER STAPLER?
I DUNNO WHERE TO BEGIN.
YER A PAL, SCAPES
I HATE THIS JOB. WHAT ABOUT YOU?
WORK WORK WORK, NUTHIN BUT WORK. THAT'S ALL THEY WANT OUT OF US
WHAT ARE WE, SLAVES?
GODDAMN THIS CALCULATOR NUMBERS DON'T ADD UP.
I THINK I'M GONNA HAVE A FROSTED DONUT WITH MY COFFEE.
IT'S NOT ON MY DIET, BUT A COUPLE LI'L DONUTS WON'T HURT
AH, FERGET IT. I CAN'T THINK IN THIS ATMOSPHERE I WISH IT WERE FRIDAY TODAY
EVERYBODY'S STUCK IN SLOTS AROUND HERE Y'EVER NOTICE THAT?
I WISH I MADE MORE MONEY TWICE AS MUCH, I'D BE SATISFIED
LOOK AROUND US. NOBODY'S HAPPY. THEY'RE ALL CONSPIRING AGAINST EACH OTHER. DON'T BE LULLED INTO AN ARTIFICIAL SENSE OF FALSE SECURITY-- IT'S CUTTHROAT
YOU HEAR ABOUT BARTLETT'S PROMOTION?
THAT LITTLE KISS-ASS EGOMANIAC.
NICE DAY OUTSIDE.
NOBODY'S GOT ANY GUTS IN THIS PLACE. DON'T GET ME WRONG, I'M NOT COMPLAINING, BUT THIS PLACE IS A BUNCHA LOSERS.
WANNA PLAY A COUPLE GAMES A PAC-MAN AFTER WORK?
MY BACK HURTS
PLUS MY NECK.
YOU GET A PEEK AT THE NEW DEPARTMENTAL ASSISTANT YET? BEE YOOTIFUL. SORTA SEXY. MAYBE A BIT TOO PERKY. BUT THAT'S BETTER'N SOME OF THE SOURPUSSES AROUND HERE
NO WAY, THOUGH. OFFICE ROMANCES ARE FATAL. I DATED A COWORKER ONCE. NOW SHE WON'T EVEN LEND ME HER STAPLER.
WILL YOU SHUT UP? YOU'RE DRIVING ME OUT OF MY MIND!
ALL RIGHT, JUST WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON AROUND HERE? MORE SHIRKING!! WELL I FOR ONE AM FED UP--AND IT'S GONNA STOP RIGHT NOW.
SCAPES--YOU'RE OUT. TERMINATED. FIRED.
BUT
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT JUST CLEAR OUT YOUR DESK AND EXIT QUIETLY.
I GUESS THIS IS GOODBYE, BINKY.
YEAH, WELL, YOU'RE BETTER OFF I MEAN IT WELL, BYE.
I'M BUSY
FINALLY. MY OWN STAPLER.
OH, GREAT. NO STAPLES
THAT'S JUST GREAT

Thompson: *But then, most pornography is more interesting than most comics.*

Obviously, when you're writing Binky you can work with your own feelings and foibles, and when you're doing Bongo you can rely on your memory, but how hard is it to write Sheba, since you never have been, and probably never will be, a woman?

Groening: It's a little harder because if I make fun of Sheba then my girl friend will think it's about her so I try to be a little careful with that. But I plan to do a lot more with Sheba. I just haven't gotten around to *Being Female Is Hell* yet. But that's definitely in the works someday.

Thompson: *Of course, you have the advantage of having three sisters, and your close friendship with Lynda Barry.*

Groening: Yeah. As a matter of fact, I often imagine each one of my sisters reading my cartoon. They're all very different and if I can imagine each one of them laughing at a cartoon I know I've got something.

I'm definitely sympathetic to the underdog, exploited minorities, women being one. Sexism still pervades our culture; it's a lot more subtle these days, but it's still here, along with racism and all the rest. In my humor I try not to kick the completely powerless. I do make fun of the *semi*-powerless (*laughs*) quite a bit, but that's basically to shake myself up and say quit kidding yourself. I love to go after people in power most of all.

On the side, I write greeting cards which a fine designer named Steve Vance executes, and I talked the greeting card company into doing a fake movie poster card for a movie called *Young Republicans In Love*, and convinced them that Republicans were arrogant enough to buy this card even though it was about them. It's pretty insulting (*laughs*) and it turns out to be one of the most popular cards we've done, so there are more Young Republican cards in the works.

Thompson: *Tell me about your newspaper syndicate, Acme.*

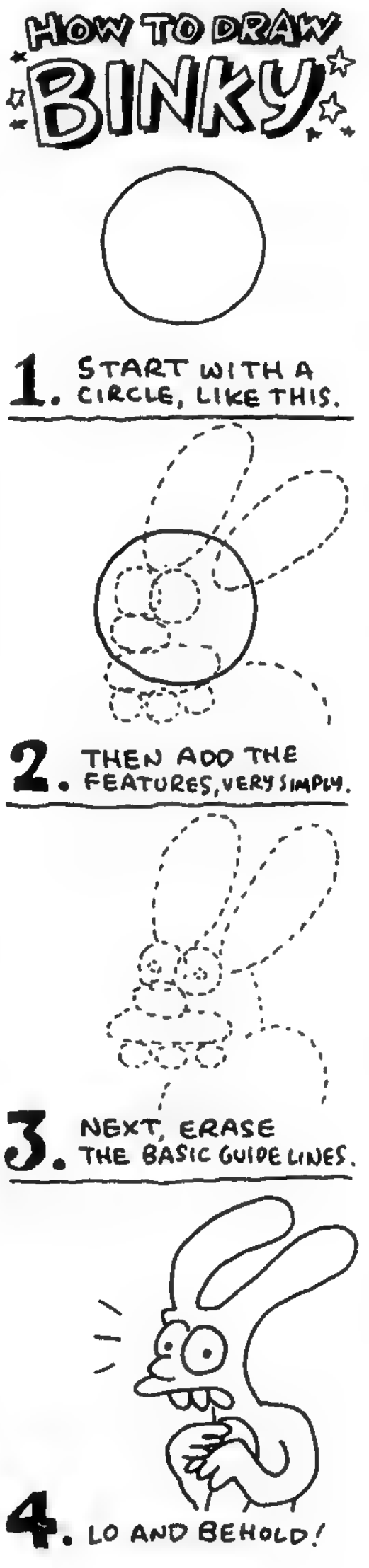
Groening: There's very little money in the alternative newsweekly situation—or at least so the editors tell me. But if you get enough of 'em you can pay the rent. So last year, with Lynda Barry and my fiancee Deborah Caplan, to whom I will no doubt be married by the time you read this interview, I formed Acme Features Syndicate. Acme syndicates Lynda Barry, me, and a Portland cartoonist named John Callahan. This has been a great thrill for us; I don't know how many newspapers Lynda's in, but I'm in 60. I got picked up by the *San Francisco Examiner*, and by my hometown daily paper the *Oregonian*, and I'm amazed to this day that a daily newspaper will have the nerve to give me that kind of space with that title.

When I began *Life in Hell* in 1977 as a little Xeroxed comic book, my girlfriend at the time said, "Why do you bother, there's no reason to do this, you're just wasting your time." But I felt compelled because of my lousy life in Los Angeles to do this little Xeroxed book, and it definitely was not done with commercial considerations in mind (*laughs*). If I had to do it over, I probably wouldn't call it *Life in Hell*, and I think from time to time about changing the title. It doesn't seem to bother people any more, although you can never tell what's going to stick in someone's craw. I get letters . . .

Thompson: *What are some of the weirdest things people complain about?*

Groening: I have done a number of strips on children's ideas about religion, God and things like that, and every time I broach one of those subjects people will have very strong ideas about this. I did a strip called "What

Excerpt from the Barry/Groening 1987 calendar.


HOW TO DRAW BINKY
1. START WITH A CIRCLE, LIKE THIS.
2. THEN ADD THE FEATURES, VERY SIMPLY.
3. NEXT, ERASE THE BASIC GUIDE LINES.
4. LO AND BEHOLD!

Does God Look Like?" in which I just asked all my friends, what did they think God looked like when they were children, and I illustrated what they told me. One person said he thought God looked like his grandfather, another person said he thought God looked like Santa Claus; I had a feeling God might possibly look like the flaming head in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, and I got a number of letters from people telling me they knew exactly what God looked like. A woman named Barbara in Ohio told me *she* was God and that people didn't understand her because they could not understand Barbara-speak, and another guy. . . I got letters from Hare Krishnas, I got letters from Jesus freaks who told me that I may call my strip *Life in Hell* but "you're *going* to Hell, dude." (*laughs*) So those go into a special file in case I ever show up headless in a canal nearby. . .

Thompson: *Festooned with sea slugs.*

Groening: . . .festooned with mutant sea slugs, the police will know—they can check the nut file.

Thompson: *I assume there have been some tentative nibbles from syndicates.*

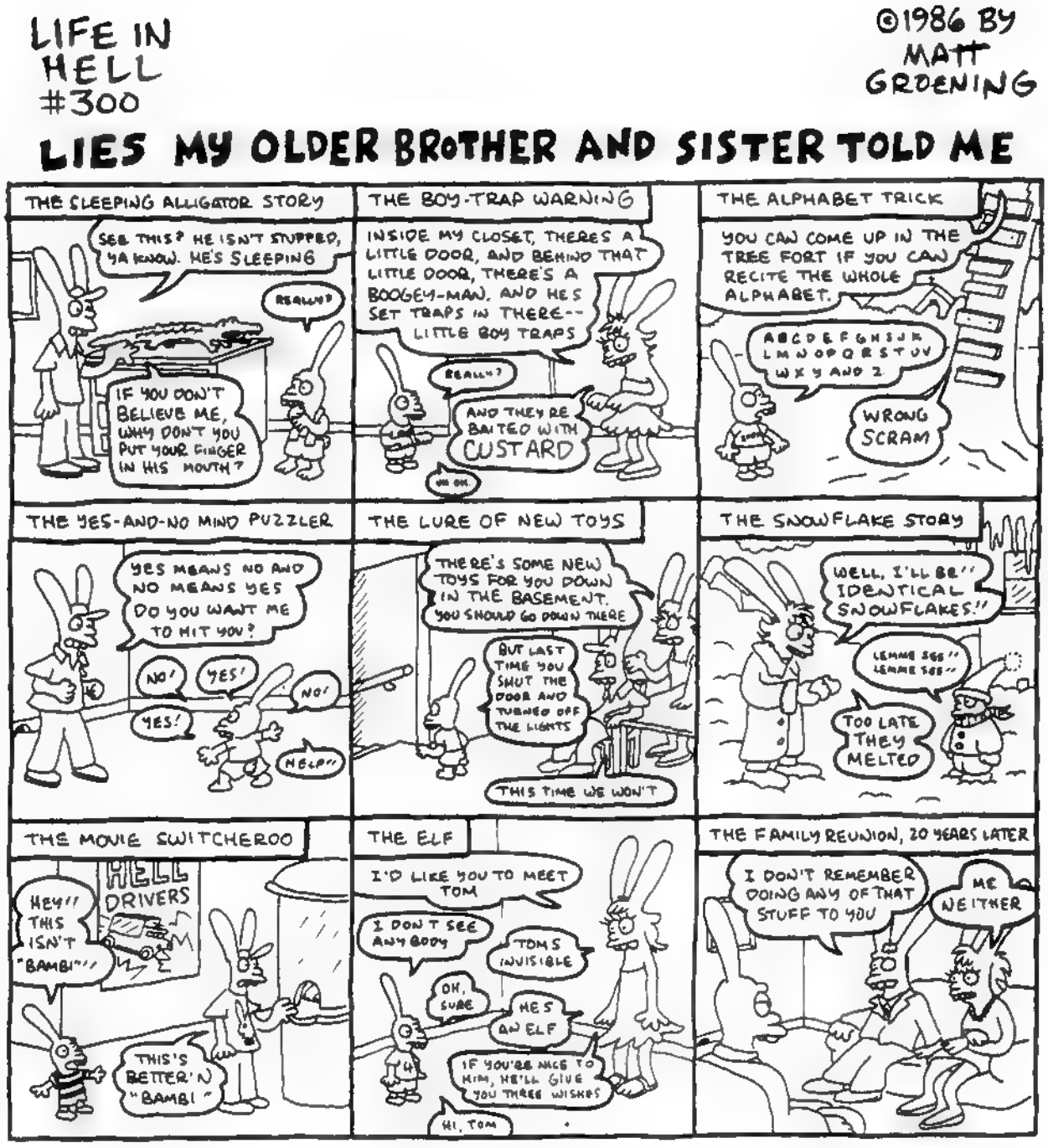
Groening: I've been approached by daily comic syndicates off and on for the last few years. I love cartooning, I like to read good cartoons, but it's not the only thing there is in my life and I certainly can't see me sweating over a drawing board every day (*laughs*) for the rest of my life writing something that is pasteurized enough to pass muster in the daily newspaper format. Newspapers don't give cartoonists enough space any more, for one thing. But the real reason is that a daily strip would just eat up my time. I like working in different media, and I most strongly love to write. What I hope is that this weekly comic strip will prove lucrative enough that I can take it and finance some of the less commercial projects I have in mind. I tell you, having to draw one comic strip a week gives me plenty of time (*laughs*) at the moment to do other things.

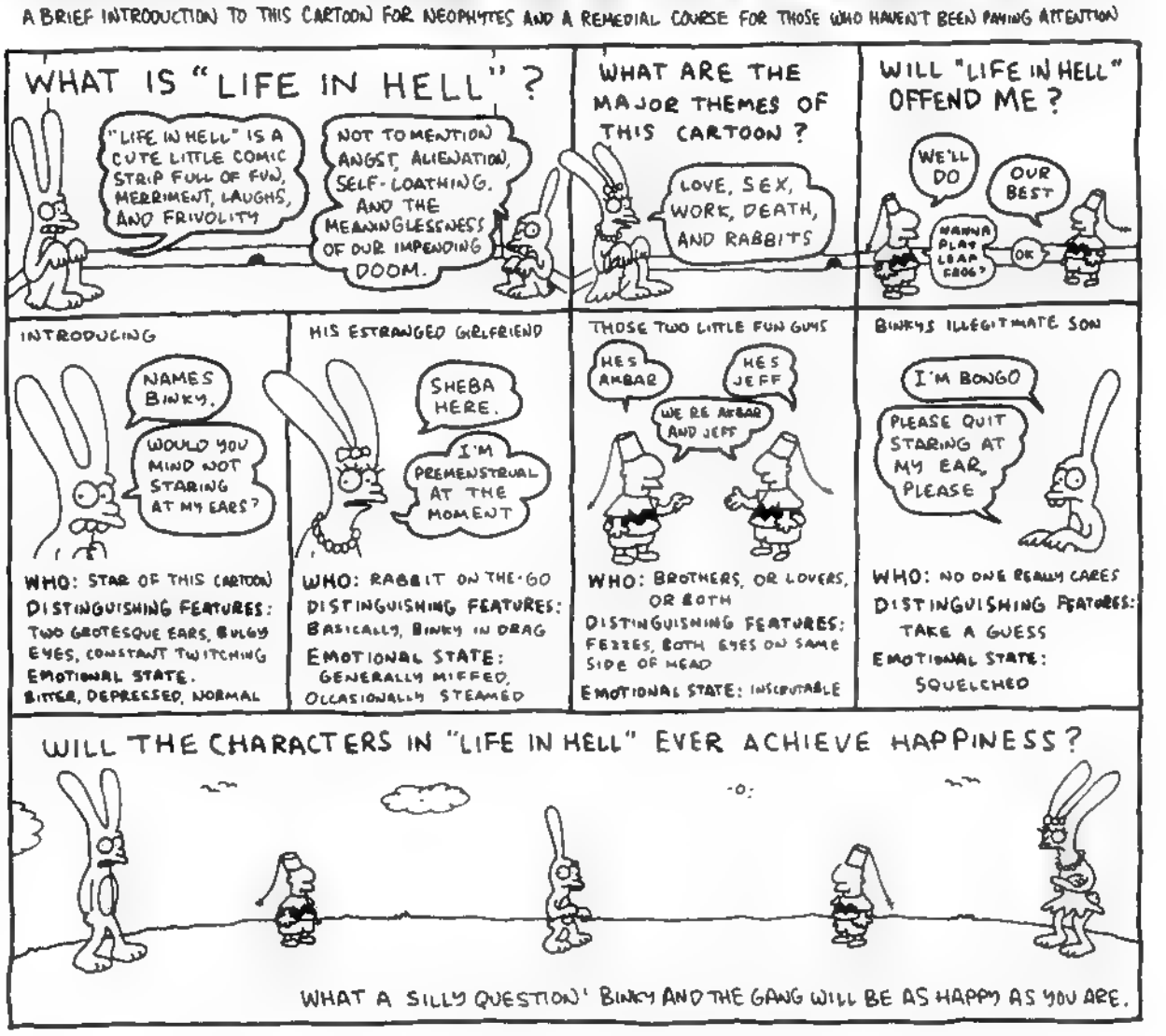
Thompson: *Gee, and here I thought you spent all day every day doing a panel or two. . .*

Groening: Well, I'm always working. For a long time, I felt guilty about random reading, but now I've convinced myself that it's research so I do quite a bit of reading and I fill up notebooks with ideas. For me, the hard part in the strip, believe it or not, is the drawing, although my drawing is as simple as you can get. I mean, I don't even fill in the black areas. It's still not quick enough for me. The ideas are there; I would much rather be writing than drawing. And as a matter of fact, that's what I appreciate more in comic strips that I do like: the writing. I love Robert Crumb's art, but I think he's really good as a writer. I like Lynda Barry as a writer. Gary Panter, another virtuoso artist, is also a terrific writer; his prose is fractured the way his images are, but he knows exactly what he's doing. Let me see. . .

Thompson: *What other cartoonists do you like?*

Groening: Well, I like Charles Schulz quite a bit. As a matter of fact, the very first characters that I ever drew were based on Charlie Brown: Akbar and Jeff. When I first drew them in the fifth grade, they didn't wear the fezzes, but they had Charlie Brown's shirt. I couldn't quite draw Charlie Brown; he looked very grotesque. . .


LIFE IN HELL #300
©1986 BY MATT GROENING
LIES MY OLDER BROTHER AND SISTER TOLD ME
THE SLEEPING ALLIGATOR STORY
SEE THIS? HE ISN'T STUFFED, YA KNOW. HE'S SLEEPING
REALLY?
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, WHY DON'T YOU PUT YOUR FINGER IN HIS MOUTH?
THE BOY-TRAP WARNING
INSIDE MY CLOSET, THERE'S A LITTLE DOOR, AND BEHIND THAT LITTLE DOOR, THERE'S A BOOGEY-MAN, AND HE'S SET TRAPS IN THERE-- LITTLE BOY TRAPS
REALLY?
AND THEY'RE BAITED WITH CUSTARD
UH OH
THE ALPHABET TRICK
YOU CAN COME UP IN THE TREE FORT IF YOU CAN RECITE THE WHOLE ALPHABET.
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y AND Z
WRONG SCRAM
THE YES-AND-NO MIND PUZZLER
YES MEANS NO AND NO MEANS YES DO YOU WANT ME TO HIT YOU?
NO!
YES!
YES!
NO!
HELP!!
THE LURE OF NEW TOYS
THERE'S SOME NEW TOYS FOR YOU DOWN IN THE BASEMENT. YOU SHOULD GO DOWN THERE
BUT LAST TIME YOU SHUT THE DOOR AND TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS
THIS TIME WE WON'T
THE SNOWFLAKE STORY
WELL, I'LL BE!! IDENTICAL SNOWFLAKES!!
LEMME SEE!! LEMME SEE!!
TOO LATE THEY MELTED
THE MOVIE SWITCHEROO
HELL DRIVERS
HEY!! THIS ISN'T "BAMBI"!!
THIS'S BETTER'N "BAMBI"
THE ELF
I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET TOM
I DON'T SEE ANYBODY
TOM'S INVISIBLE
OH, SURE
HE'S AN ELF
IF YOU'RE NICE TO HIM, HE'LL GIVE YOU THREE WISHES
HI, TOM
THE FAMILY REUNION, 20 YEARS LATER
I DON'T REMEMBER DOING ANY OF THAT STUFF TO YOU
ME NEITHER


LIFE IN HELL
©1986 BY MATT GROENING
HELL FOR BEGINNERS
A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THIS CARTOON FOR NEOPHYTES AND A REMEDIAL COURSE FOR THOSE WHO HAVEN'T BEEN PAYING ATTENTION
WHAT IS "LIFE IN HELL"?
"LIFE IN HELL" IS A CUTE LITTLE COMIC STRIP FULL OF FUN, MERRIMENT, LAUGHS, AND FRIVOLITY
NOT TO MENTION ANGST, ALIENATION, SELF-LOATHING, AND THE MEANINGLESSNESS OF OUR IMPENDING DOOM.
WHAT ARE THE MAJOR THEMES OF THIS CARTOON?
LOVE, SEX, WORK, DEATH, AND RABBITS
WILL "LIFE IN HELL" OFFEND ME?
WE'LL DO
OUR BEST
WANNA PLAY LEAP FROG?
OK
INTRODUCING
NAMES BINKY.
WOULD YOU MIND NOT STARING AT MY EARS?
WHO: STAR OF THIS CARTOON
DISTINGUISHING FEATURES: TWO GROTESQUE EARS, BULGY EYES, CONSTANT TWITCHING
EMOTIONAL STATE: BITTER, DEPRESSED, NORMAL
HIS ESTRANGED GIRLFRIEND
SHEBA HERE.
I'M PREMENSTRUAL AT THE MOMENT
WHO: RABBIT ON THE GO
DISTINGUISHING FEATURES: BASICALLY, BINKY IN DRAG
EMOTIONAL STATE: GENERALLY MIFFED, OCCASIONALLY STEAMED
THOSE TWO LITTLE FUN GUYS
HE'S AKBAR
HE'S JEFF
WE'RE AKBAR AND JEFF
WHO: BROTHERS, OR LOVERS, OR BOTH
DISTINGUISHING FEATURES: FEZZES, BOTH EYES ON SAME SIDE OF HEAD
EMOTIONAL STATE: INSCRUTABLE
BINKYS ILLEGITIMATE SON
I'M BONGO
PLEASE QUIT STARING AT MY EAR, PLEASE
WHO: NO ONE REALLY CARES
DISTINGUISHING FEATURES: TAKE A GUESS
EMOTIONAL STATE: SQUELCHED
WILL THE CHARACTERS IN "LIFE IN HELL" EVER ACHIEVE HAPPINESS?
WHAT A SILLY QUESTION! BINKY AND THE GANG WILL BE AS HAPPY AS YOU ARE.

Thompson: *Actually, Charlie Brown is one of the most impossible cartoon characters for anyone but the creator to draw.*

Groening: I tried to draw Popeye as well, and Popeye's very hard to draw also. So Charlie Brown evolved into Akbar and Jeff and, as a tribute to Charles Schulz, still have Charlie Brown's shirt. Now, the names Akbar and Jeff I thought are random enough so I never expected what happened a few months ago when I got a call from Arizona from a guy named Akbar whose roommate was named Jeff and whose friends were all kidding them, saying that the comic strip "Akbar and Jeff" was about them. In fact, this guy wanted to know, "Have you been spying on us?" (*laughs*) Akbar of Arizona is a performance artist, one of whose goals is to make the world's biggest omelet, so I think he has a pretty good sense of humor about the characters Akbar and Jeff.

One week I put in a line about Akbar and Jeff that they were brothers or lovers or possibly both; and sometime later I came up with a strip in which the revelation that indeed they most likely were gay was part of the punchline. It turns out it was a real good decision; I got lots of people real excited about it and it perturbed a number of other people, which makes me happy: if I can make somebody laugh and really annoy the hell out of someone else I think I've done my job (*laughs*).

Other cartoonists that I admire in the daily comic strips include Gary Larson, Jim Unger, who draws *Herman*, Nicole Hollander—I can't believe she gets away with what she gets away with, there's another interesting example. I'm pleased that Bill Griffith has been able to take Zippy as far as he has—and in the underground cartoonists I reallly appreciate the storytelling of Kim Deitch. I like Mimi Pond, and, among local cartoonists, I like a woman named Carol Lay; are you familiar with her?

Thompson: *In fact, we're publishing her first solo book later this year,* Good Girls.

Groening: Oh really? Good! Carol Lay is a virtuoso artist who has got some really wild ideas. There are some other cartoonists who are not widely known yet but I think will be in the future: Michael Dougan out of Seattle is talented, as is J.R. Williams, and who else? Oh, I also very much appreciate Aline Kominsky-Crumb, who I think is pretty insightful and makes me laugh. I enjoy reading her stuff.

Thompson: *You were talking about writing projects.*

Groening: Yes. This is another thing I'd really like to mention. One of the things I'm most excited about right now is a project which I call my Schoolkids' Notebooks project. A few years ago I used to write a weekly music column called "Sound Mix" for the *Los Angeles Reader*, and ostensibly it was supposed to be about music, but I got tired first writing about bands that everybody had already read about, and started to write about bands that had names I found amusing, like Grandpa Becomes A Fungus and Severed Head In A Bag. And it got to the point where I started making up names of bands (*laughs*). Then I started reviewing my night out, and I didn't always make it to the night club, and sometimes didn't even bother *trying* to make it to the night club, and I was reviewing and writing about all sorts of wild stuff.

One of the things I wrote about was a walk that I took one night by a high school toward the end of the school year. I found a book report on the lawn, along with all sorts of bits of paper that were strewn all over the place by rambunctious teenagers happy to be free for the summer, and the book report was about the book *Cujo* by Stephen King. But the kid called it *Cojo* and he obviously had not read the book, he had just seen the movie, and it was such a funny report that I started picking up other pieces of paper. I walked around the corner and there was a dumpster full of notebooks. I got a carboard box and collected the notebooks and carted them home and ran the best stuff in my column for the next four weeks until my editor

TRIED-AND-TRUE TAUNTS AND RETORTS
HA HA HEE CAN'T CATCH ME CAN'T CATCH A FLEA ON A CHRISTMAS TREE
I'D RATHER BE DEAD THAN RED ON THE HEAD
LIAR LIAR PANTS ON FIRE HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE WIRE
GEE YOU'RE PRETTY.
PRETTY STUPID.
GOSH YOU'RE STRONG.
STRONG SMELLING.
YOU'VE GOT A GROOVY BUTT.
IT'S FULL OF GROOVES.
I'LL KNOCK YOU SO HIGH IN THE AIR YOU'LL STARVE TO DEATH COMING DOWN.
HEY STUPID!
GLAD YOU KNOW YOUR NAME.
LOOK UP. LOOK DOWN. LOOK AT MY THUMB. GEE YOU'RE DUMB.
YOU AND WHAT ARMY?

Another excerpt from the '87 calendar.

told me to knock it off if I knew what was good for me.

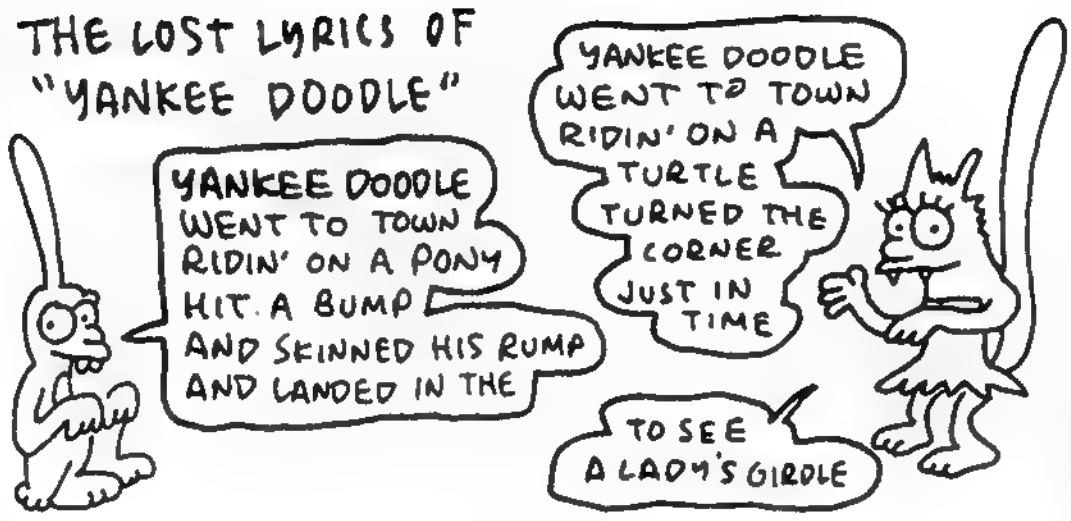
Anyway, I had so much more material than I could print in the column just from this little bit of stuff I picked up. The following year, this last June, long after my column at the *Reader* had ended and I had been fired by that newspaper, I went back to Los Angeles high schools and did the same thing on a much grander scale. (Actually, there's nothing grand about fishing around in dumpsters. I told all my friends that I had this project, that I was going to gather kids' notebooks. They said, "Oh, be sure to call me, I'll come help you out," but when the time actually came to go through this trash everyone seemed to be busy.) So I was by myself in my little station wagon and I filled it up many times. I went to every high school I could find in Los Angeles and a number in the San Fernando Valley and I filled up my garage full of notebooks and I have been going through them.

I've gone through about half the material, and I have enough for a large book of kid's writings and the stuff is hilarious, scary, depressing, and astonishing, sometimes all at the same time. I've got everything from vocabulary lists where every word is used incorrectly in a sentence to love letters, notes passed in class, secret diaries, written threats to other students, lots of book reports that are obviuously based on a movie watching experience. And some of the stuff is just wonderful. If I can publish it the project will reach fruition, but right now I'm doing it for myself. I figure that with a few changed names and a few changed details I'll be able to get this out. But it is wild.

Somebody said, "Oh, this is sort of the '80s version of Art Linkletter's *Kids Write the Damdest Things*," and it is, but if you were going to give it an equivalent title, it would be *Kids Write the Most Motherfuckinest Shit You've Ever Seen* (*laughs*) because what kids are writing about these days you or I either didn't know or wouldn't have admitted knowing when we were in high school. There's an incredible amount of profanity, confessions of drug abuse, lots of sexual dalliances, and then the more traditional high school stuff we're all familiar with.

But the stuff is just amazing, and the teacher's comments are equally funny. One of my favorite ones is the kid who had to write an essay on "The Person I'd Most Like to Meet in History" and the kid wrote "The person I would like to meet in History is this girl. She sits in row C. . ." and he goes on and on about this girl. The teacher's comment at the bottom is "This person should have died before you were born." Now if the kid doesn't get the point of the essay title, the kid's *not* going to get the comment either (*laughs*).

Another girl, who through other papers I realized was 16 years old, unmarried, living at home with a new baby and being knocked about by her parents, wrote in an essay, "Sometimes teachers don't understand that maybe students like me have problems that make it difficult to do our best school work, such as perhaps maybe we have a baby, no boy friend, and we have a dad who knocks us around, and maybe we don't have any money, and . . ." etc. The teacher's comment is, "Too many run-on sentences. D minus." True, there were a lot of run-on sentences, but I don't think that was perhaps the most perceptive response to the essay.


THE LOST LYRICS OF "YANKEE DOODLE"
YANKEE DOODLE WENT TO TOWN RIDIN' ON A PONY HIT A BUMP AND SKINNED HIS RUMP AND LANDED IN THE
YANKEE DOODLE WENT TO TOWN RIDIN' ON A TURTLE TURNED THE CORNER JUST IN TIME
TO SEE A LADY'S GIRDLE

And yet another one (so buy the damn thing already!)

One of the great things is that a number of high schools required the kids to keep journals for the entire year, usually with specific topics for the day, so you get a look at a kid's life. It's amazing stuff. That's another part of my interest in school satisfied. I'm fascinated by the idea of the words of people who are without a forum and generally remain unheard. These kids definitely have not memorized their *Elements of Style* by Strunk and White, but although they fail by arbitrary standards of correct English usage in this country, they are sometimes eloquent in their limited way.

Thompson: *I understand you're also working on a screenplay project with Lynda Barry?*

Groening: The screenplay we're working on off and on when we have time. Lynda and I have planned to write a number of movies and none of have them have gone yet. But the second somebody sits us down and writes out a check you're going to see some fast writing. It's just that at the moment we both have other projects that people *have* written checks for (*laughs*).

Thompson: *Why do you hate rock critics?*

Groening: Well, it's nothing. . .some of my best friends are rock critics (*laughs*). But as a career choice for a serious writer it is very undesirable. For one thing, it doesn't pay very much, but for another, the idea of glorifying arrogant millionaires just doesn't seem to be the most fulfilling pursuit. I can speak from personal experience because I used to do that, although I tried to make my job interesting by concentrating on the more eccentric people on the fringes of pop music. I had a good time while I did it. I had a great time interviewing Nina Hagen, who believes in *everything*. I sometimes think I believe in nothing, but Nina Hagen on the other hand believes in everything. I mean, if you talk to her about some new spiritual master you know, she'll go for it. Speaking of women, Diamanda Galas, who has nothing to do with rock music except she performs in rock night clubs from time to time, who basically is a very serious screamer (*laughs*). She screams into many microphones. I also interviewed Yma Sumac, the old so-called Inca Princess who did many albums back in the 1950s and has continued her career to this day. So it was fun. But there's not very many people out there who are interested in reading about the other obscure cranks that I bothered to hype.

Film critics are just an easy target (*laughs*).

However, although I'm fairly contemptuous about most freelance endeavors (*laughs*), I was one, so I'm sympathetic and I still like to read them.

I'm sorry not to be more energetic. I just got back from a book tour.

Thompson: *That's right. You and Art Spiegelman share a publisher.*

Groening: Right, Pantheon Books. As a matter of fact Art Spiegelman introduced my cartoons to people at Pantheon and they thought they were interesting, so I'm indebted to him. We share the same birthday, by the way—not the same year, though. Art was in town so we compared notes on how we were being treated by the publishing company. We're both being treated fine. I've been all over the country now, signing books and doing obscure little radio shows. It's been real fun to get a whirlwind tour of the United States, looking at it from the windows of airplanes and taxis and from windows of bookstores, which is basically how I'm seeing the sights.

But I think that my books *Love Is Hell* and *Work Is Hell* have been pretty successful for Pantheon, as has Art Spiegelman's book *Maus*. I hope they'll open the door for other weird cartoon books. I think that's a step in the right direction toward getting more of the kind of cartoonists I want to see into print. Comic book stores are still unfortunately off limits to a lot of adult Americans who would not hesitate to pick up a book if it's endorsed by being on the counter of a book store.

Thompson: *You said earlier that if you'd gone through the direct-sales/comics shop market, you'd probably have failed. What kind of relationship do you have with that market as this point? I know you frequent the San Diego Comics convention. . .*

Groening: That's because I just like to look at old comics and this gives me an excuse.

Thompson: *Do a lot of kids walk up to you and say "What do you draw?" and then get awfully confused when you show them?*

Groening: Yeah. I did a book signing at Golden Apple Comics up on Melrose last year for their grand opening and I was seated between the Hernandez Brothers, Jaime and Gilbert. These kids came up with their little blank notebooks full of superhero drawings and assumed I was the third Hernandez brother. I would draw Bongo in their books (*laughs*) and they would stare at me with this look of disbelief and disgust that I had ruined their books. A lot of them thought it was some sort of really cruel joke (*laughs*).

But *some day* they'll realize that I'm not a cartoonist. I'm a doodle-god.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Love Is Hell (1986, Pantheon Press)
Work Is Hell (1986, Pantheon Press)

The BAD BOYS

©1986 by JWILLIAMS*

WE GOT OUR "PRESS CARDS" TODAY!

YES! NOW WE ARE OFFICIAL REPORTERS FOR THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER!

PRESS

PRESS

NOW WE MUST GET "THE BIG STORY"!

I KNOW! WE MUST INTERVIEW THE NEW KID WHO JUST MOVED TO OUR NEIGHBORHOOD!

--BUT-- THE NEW KID WHO JUST MOVED HERE IS A...A **GIRL!!**

--A **GIRL!?!**

EWWW!!!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

...LATER...

HELLO! WE ARE OFFICIAL REPORTERS FOR THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER! WE HAVE COME TO INTERVIEW YOU!

?

GEE! THIS IS EXCITING! I HAVE NEVER BEEN INTERVIEWED BEFORE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!!

THAT IS OKAY! WE ARE EXPERTS IN THE REPORTING BUSINESS! WE WILL ASK YOU QUESTIONS AND YOU JUST HAVE TO ANSWER! FIRST, WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

PRESS

WELL, MY <u>REAL</u> NAME IS MARGARET ALICE, BUT EVERYONE JUST CALLS ME <u>PEGGY</u>!

--YOU MEAN **PIGGY?!**

HA! HA! HA! HA!

?

--CAN YOU SPELL "PIG" BACKWARDS AND THEN SAY "FUNNY"?

G-I-P FUNNY!

--YOU **DO?!?**

HA! HA! HA! HA!

?

--CAN YOU LOOK DOWN YOUR SHIRT AND SPELL "ATTIC"?

A-T-T-I-C!!

--ONLY ONE?! HA! HA! HA! HA!

??

--AFTER EVERYTHING I SAY, YOU SAY "PEA GREEN SOUP"!

OKAY!

--WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR BREAKFAST?

PEA GREEN SOUP!

--WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR LUNCH?

PEA GREEN SOUP!

WHAT DID YOU HAVE FOR DINNER?

PEA GREEN SOUP!

--WHAT DID YOU DO ALL NIGHT LONG?

PEA GREEN SOUP!

--YOU DID?!? HA! HA! HA! HA!

???

--I DIDN'T KNOW THAT INTERVIEWS COULD BE SO STRANGE!

YES! ALMOST AS STRANGE AS YOUR FACE!!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

YOU BOYS ARE NOT VERY NICE! I AM GOING TO GO HOME!

HE! HE! HE!

WAIT! SHE IS LEAVING AND WE HAVE NOT YET GOTTEN "THE BIG STORY"!

NO, BUT I HAVE AN IDEA!

THE NEXT DAY...

LOOK AT THIS HEADLINE IN DAD'S PAPER!

CHILD FALLS INTO MINE SHAFT

Rescue attempts unsuccessful

THAT IS BAD REPORTING! THEY DID NOT GET ALL OF THE FACTS!

RIGHT! SHE DID NOT FALL IN! WE HAD TO PUSH HER!!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

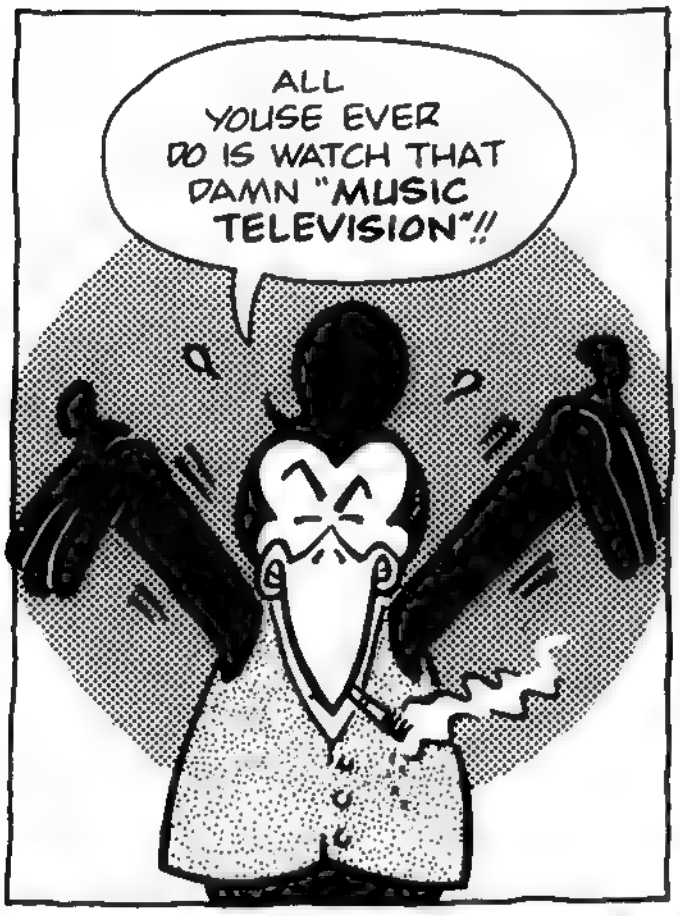
WHO SAYS THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A BAD BOY?

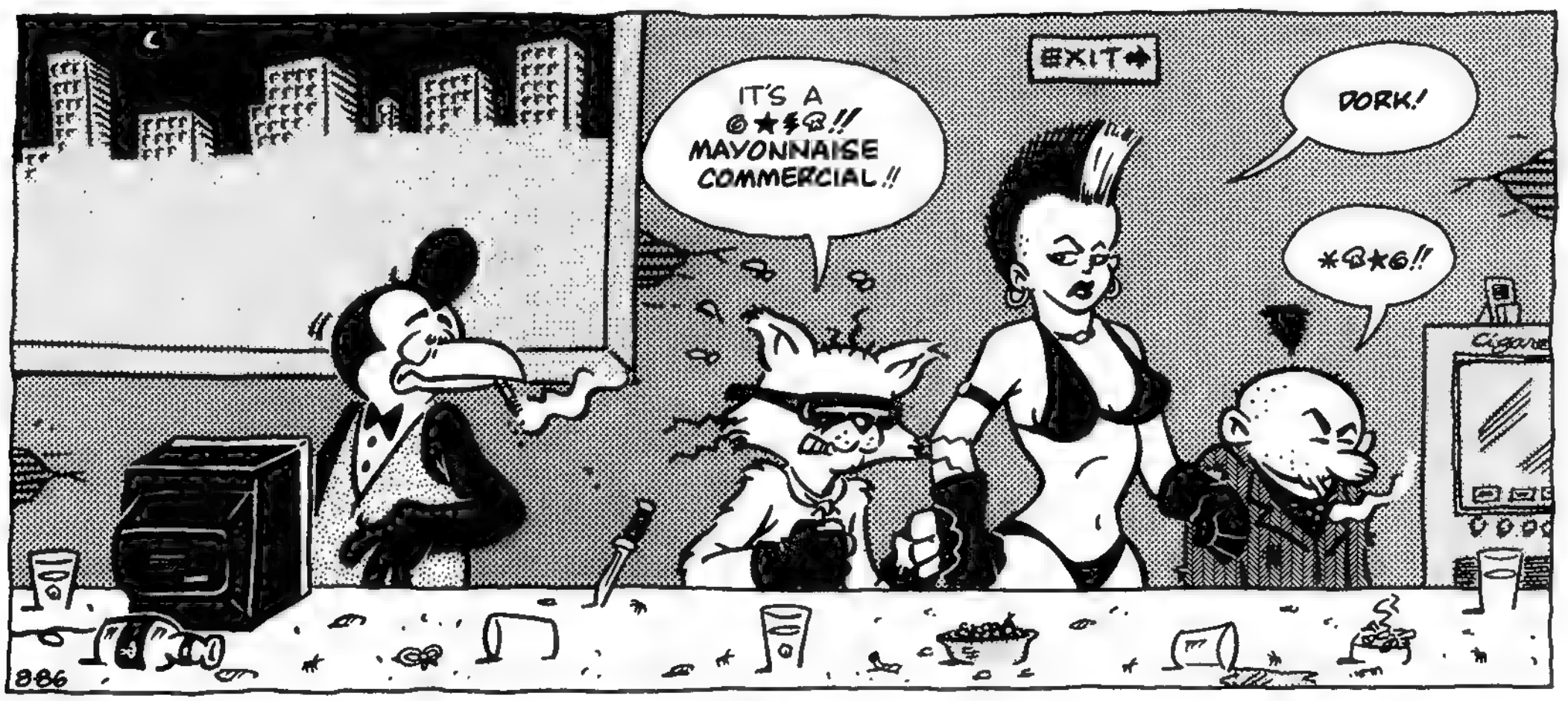
The End.

*FOR PEG, WITH APOLOGIES.

PUNX

©'86 GARY FIELDS





Finally.
A comic book for geniuses.

PREPARE TO RECORD, "REZ"... EXPERIMENT 4765-B: "THE EFFECT OF A GREY POWDERY SUBSTANCE ON SALIVA"...
GRAY
BUT, DOCTOR, COULDN'T I JUST SPIT INTO THE GREY POWDERY SUBSTANCE?
HA! HA! YOU'RE FORGETTING SCIENTIFIC PROCEDURE, ROY.
SORRY.
©1986 Scott Shaw!

Sort of.

IT'S SCIENCE
with Dr. Radium

Coming this fall from Slave Labor Graphics

What I Bombed My Summer Va

Remember those "What I Did on My Summer Vacation" essays you had to write in school every September? Well, we'll bet they were never as colorful as these remembrances of the fun-loving kids at Gamel Adbel Nasser Memorial Elementary, the best little terrorist school in the whole Middle East.

1. Mohammed Abdul Abed

First of all we had to pick up what's left of my family from the refugee camp. Then we had to go get our false passports and our travel instructions. And then the best thing in the whole Moslem world happened! We were going to spend the summer in Hollywood, California, U.S. of A.! Surfing, sunshine, wine coolers, and naked beach bunnies! All the wickedness spawned by the Great Satan Reagan himself! Praise Allah! Or, as we say in Hollywood, "Bitchin'!" None of what's left of my training buddies has ever been to California before, so I knew they were going to shit their robes if I ever got back to tell them about it. Which I did, or I wouldn't be writing this dumb report for school, would I? As the Evil Ones in America say, "Hey, get real."

So we stole off under cover of darkness. We didn't have to, but that's how Pop says we're supposed to be. . . sneaky. Just like on TV. And then we arrived under cover of darkness at something called LAX. They must have named it after their security precautions. Boy, I tell you, we could have blown up our whole plane so easy with all the stuff we snuck aboard, and we were going to, but then my aunt had to spoil the fun by reminding Pop that we were on board the plane, too. What a total drag, as the imperialists say. So we decided not to and I didn't speak to my aunt for the rest of the trip. Honest. But we did decide that it would be a super neat idea to just leave a real small bomb in one of the toilets for later. Kaboom, as they say in Hollywood.

After we waited a real long time for our munitions and luggage at the stupid baggage claim, then we drove to a real cool hotel in Beverly Hills. The next day around the pool there were a hundred-million women without hardly no clothes on. Hot dog, as the decadent Western youth say.

Now here comes the good part. We got to go to the beach! Those California beaches, they're wide and smooth and sandy and hot, just like our rightful homeland. But did you ever see our rightful homeland covered with a thousand quadrillion half-naked Western bitches? I mean, like, all we ever get are these dumpby fascist Zionist terrorists with their titties hanging down in their khaki shirts, right? I mean, like, gag a camel.

But boy, those Godless American whores are so degraded by immoral capitalism. That's what Mom said. I said, "Hey, gnarly! You can see the cracks in their ass and everything!" Pop and I would drop our cartridge belts right near these sweating sluts and then when we picked them up we'd stare at their titties. I swear to Mohammed! And they didn't mind one little bit. Well, except for one, and we took care of her. Like Pop said, it was all in the name of Arab unity, right?

Later we swam out in the surf and released some floating mines. Surf's up, man! Ha ha ha! And before we left we scattered a few pressure-sensitive fragment mines in the sand for the late arrivals. Very late, as they say on the wicked American television. Ha ha ha!

When we got back to our car some atheistic dork had parked so close to the driver's side Pop couldn't get in. Boy, was Pop pissed. So I said why not wait for the Satanic nerd and cripple him for the rest of his life? Pop liked that. Sis too. The goof never knew what hit him. Then we went out for burgers and fries.

Later on we went to Disneyland. Right away we got surrounded by all these horrible imperialist animals, but the worst one was the infidel dog Goofy. And why was he worst? You've seen how big his nose is—and you know what that means. So we tore it off and Pop kept it to make a lampshade when we got home.

We went down Main Street, the soulless remnant of America's Godless past, and I made Pop buy me a Kit Kat bar. Then we snuck into the Abraham Lincoln show and we replaced the robot's decadent speech with a tape of the holy sayings of the Glorious Leader of the Islamic Revolution. It was real funny when a big fat maggotty Yankee housewife said, "Gosh, that's strange. I remember hearing that Lincoln freed the slaves, but I never knew he wanted to drive the white man into the sea."

Next we went to the Land of Evil Fantasies and got on the Small World ride. but we didn't stay there long. Just long enough to take all the non-Arab singing dummies hostage. It'll be a really small world when we get through with it.

Tomorrowland was next. But these lying Western desert apples didn't show the real land of Tomorrow, when the Islamic revolution will have swept the world and camels will strut proudly down Hollywood boulevard and Santa Claus will wear a turban. They just showed dumb submarines and a monorail. First we fixed all the Autorama cars up as car bombs. It was a laugh riot. The signs said not to put your hands outside the cars. But those kids couldn't help it. Their hands were flying through the air.

The last thing was we got on the submarine ride. Our vacation was about over so Pop decided we could save plane fare by hijacking it. He held a .45 to the loudspeaker and ordered it to take us to the Line of Death. And that's how we got home.

2. Abdul Abed Mohammed

Call me the worm of Allah.

When I first got to New York I thought, "Gee-had, why do the Godless camel turds call it the Big Apple?" I thought about it and thought about it, but I couldn't figure it out. So finally I just thought to myself, Mohammed take it! All that matters is that I behave like a big worm and devour from the inside out, thank you very much.

My uncle Ibrahim met me at the airport and took me to his house, except that it wasn't really a house. He lived in the back room of his liquor store. After I cleaned up we prayed to Allah, and then when my uncle wasn't looking I went pee-pee in the bourbon. But quickly I repented and threw it away. It is not right that the Evil Ones in America should drink of our holy urine.

Later on I went for a walk. It was very saddening at first. I walked and walked but I couldn't find any Americans. There were lots and lots of smelly Italians and noisy Puerto Ricans and grotesque Irish dogs, but no Americans. But after a while I finally saw one. It was a pale little boy bouncing a ball against a porch. I walked up to the Godless maggot and politely asked if it would like to play *Perforate the Yankee* with me. Gullible capitalist fish-belly that he was, he said yes, so we found an alley and I perforated my first Yankee, thank you very much.

Then I walked to the Empire State Building. It is so tall that it hurts your neck to gaze too long at the top. But I did not care about the pain. I just stood there on the sidewalk and looked up and shivered with delight at the

On cation

By Will Jacobs, Gerard Jones, and Jim Zook

Illustrations by Chas. Gillen

though of the day when we take over America and how we will throw the soulless mongrels from their tallest buildings like ripe fruit from a giant date-palm. Perhaps if Allah smiles upon me, I thought, I will someday get to hurl Nancy Reagan from this building. A feverish joy seized me as I imagined her falling like a crippled eagle, bejewelled arms and legs flailing, then turning to chutney against the sidewalk.

The next day my uncle took me to see the Statue of Liberty and I had my first orgasm since the time little Shewahi let me see her nose. Not that I embraced a woman or one of the little boys in the crowd, of course. No, I spilled my blessed seed at the sight of all those pasty American tourists packed into one place. And not just any place, but at the site of America's satanic symbol of capitalistic freedom. Mohammed take it! I wanted to drive a truck-bomb into the statue's unwashed garden of forbidden delights right there and then, but my uncle forbade it. "You stupid ragtop," he said. "Don't you know that we're waiting to strike until they've finished refurbishing the thing, thank you very much?"

In the next few days, though, I finally got to have a little fun. On Tuesday I snapped some elevator cables in the World Trade Center. On Wednesday I blew up some cab drivers. Unfortunately no one in New York seemed to care. On Thursday I set fire to a convent. That made me think of a joke. You know what's black and white and red all over and screams? A burning nun.

But the most fun I had all summer was when I went to the zoo that Friday. There is a decadent American song that says it is all happening at the zoo. I do believe this. I do believe it is true.

Take the elephants, for example. The elephants are very big in America and they have very big feet. Their feet are so big in fact that if you put the head of a Zionist girl under one of their feet it will crush the whole thing, even the entire nose if the head is turned sideways.

In American zoos, children eat this thing called cotton candy. The stuff is like whipped colored sugar and very thick. You can stick razor blades in it and they won't even show. It is also very sticky and it was funny to see the tongue chunks stick to it after the razor blades had done Allah's work.

Yes, I do believe it is all happening at the zoo. I hope I can visit an American zoo next summer too because I have this great idea for an experiment involving a rhinoceros and Dr. Ruth. Thank you very much.

3. Abed Mohammed Abdul

Ever since the South Lebanon massacres, my family hasn't been able to afford to take any vacations or anything. Mostly that's on account of I don't have any family anymore. Except for my little sister Huda, but she hardly counts 'cause she's just a creepy little kid. And then I've got some parts of my big brother that I keep in my drawer next to my steelies, but he's just there to remind me of my holy mission and junk.

So anyway, I can't take any vacations to New York or America or anyplace, but every year my den master in the Camel Scouts organizes a camping trip. They call it the Jihad Jamoree and it's a regular 9mm barrel of fun. On this year I almost didn't get to go. Every year to go you have to get two merit badges, and I only had one, for "Wood Burning." That was back when our den took that American hostage, Reverend Wood. So anyway it was the day before the camping trip

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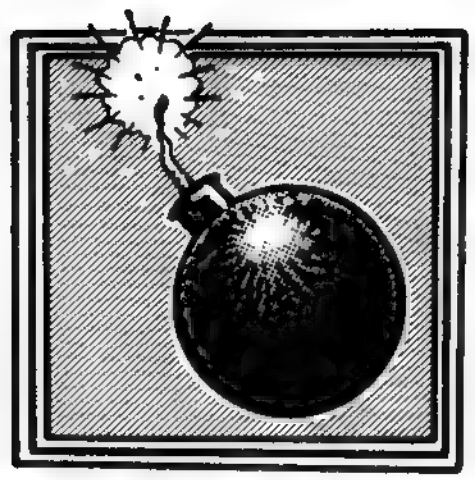
Will Jacobs and Gerard Jones are the authors of the books The Beaver Papers *and* The Great Comic Book Heroes. *They are also contributing editors to* National Lampoon. *Jim Zook, their friend, remains a mystery.*

Summer Vacation



and I only had one merit badge, but then I found an old Jewish lady I could help cross the street—half-way—and so I got to go.

But then the horriblest thing in the world happened and you know what it was? Bet you can't guess. Come on, guess. Guess, or I'll kill every child in this room, one by one. Ha ha! That's a joke. But it wasn't no joke what happened to me. The den master said that since there was nobody to take care of my bratty little sister I was gonna have to take her along. Take her along on a camping trip! With the guys! Well I moaned and I screamed and I rent my clothes and beat my breast and all that junk we do for American TV cameras when we pretend we're sad that our brother got blown to pieces or something, but it didn't do any good. The den master said it was the will of Allah and he got out the camel whip to prove it. I tell you, I was so mad right then I could have killed him, only he moved his head at the last second.

That creepy Biff el Nidal laughed at me when I took Huda on the bus, but when I pushed him and asked if he wanted to fire-fight he shut up. None of the other guys said anything, but I knew they were snickering behind their hands, except the guys who didn't have hands, and they were laughing up their sleeves. And all the way up the where the Jamboree was in the Golan Heights Huda kept saying stupid stuf like, "If you catch a little Israeli girl, can I play Barbies with her before you pull the trigger?" and I'd say, "Holy Cow. . .I mean, Holy War, Huda! You want all the guys to think I'm some kinda creepy Jew lover?"

Up at the Jamboree we did all the regular scout stuff, like rubbing sticks for fire and putting up tipis and crawling under machine gun fire. It was all pretty boring until Stinky Jibal farted during Anal Explosive Concealment practice. He kept falling into our couscous for the next three days.

Then it was time for the biggest, bestest part of the whole scorching summer: Our desert hike, with the extra-special kibbutz bombing and weinie roast at the end. Only my stupid sister almost wrecked the whole thing. You know how we have to show off our wilderness skills and junk on the hike? Well I had just finished laying my wire to catch Israeli soldeirs when she had to get tangled up in one and we had to cut her hand off to get her out. But did that teach her a lesson? Heck no. The next day she got into our mortar project and got her other hand blown off. I bet you're saying, Well, not having any hands ought to keep her out of mischief. But you don't know Huda. When me and Spanky Assad were trying to get our merit badges in pungee sticks, she had to come around stickin' her nose in what we were doing and she lost her left foot. I mean, talk about dumb kids. Well then for the rest of the hike she was hopping around, whining for me to pick her and what do you think happened? The den master got mad at *me* because she was bugging the other guys. So finally when we finished laying down our practice minefield I threw her into it and that took care of her hopping. Then our den master said, "It is like the American decadent liberal dogs say, 'A mine is a terrible thing to waste.'" We all laughed cause he was a real funny guy and we liked him. But then he stepped on a mine and that was even funnier.

Well finally we got to burn the kibbutz and we were all out there toasting those kosher weinies and singing campfire songs like "Old MacDonald Bought the Farm" and "Blow Blow Blow Up Your Boat" and "99 Bottles of Gasoline on the Wall" and we had a couple of real fun hours before Huda slithered up and started begging me to feed her. Well I fed her a little and then Biff el Nidal said, "I bet that's not the first Zionist weinie she's bit down on," and then I pushed his face into the fire and held it there, 'cause nobody can say junk like that about my little sister. So then all the guys cheered and I felt real good. I got up and went over to the kibbutz to lop off another weiner, and when I looked up I saw the stars real big above me and I thought, "When I get big I'm gonna reach for those stars. And I'm gonna get there. And Mom and Dad'll be proud, 'cause the stars are close to Heaven, and they'll be able to hear the screams."

4. Mohammedette Abdulette Abedette

Crash, boom, bang! The explosives ignited a grease fire in the crowded family style restaurant and I was off on the most exhilarating adventure of my life. *Sacre guerre!* But first let me tell you a little bit about myself.

My name is Abdulette, but *Les Francais* call me *la chere terreuristine.* I am 13, a very attractive and mature 13. Oh yes, it is very true! And this is my summer story.

My parents sent me to Paris to improve *mon francais* and to make like a flea upon the decadent dogs of the flaccid self-proclaimed First World. *Tres amusant, n'est-ce pas?*

Once in gay Paris I secured employment as an edible commodities broker or, how do you say, hash-slinger at a McDonald's hamburger outlet in Pigalle—bearing witness to the horrible fact that the strangling tentacles of smothering American capitalism have slithered across the broad waters of this mighty earth's glorious oceans to reach out and plant their evil roots in the sacred soils of Mohammed's backyard. . .just don't get me started, okay? Just don't get me started. Oo la la. *Vous meritez un "break" aujourd'hui, ma chere.*

Oh, and I met this most adorably cute guy named—are you ready for this?—Pierre. How the very name fills me with joy and electricity. Allah, what a hunk and a half. But I am getting ahead of myself very much. *Je suis trop belle, non?*

Once I was well settled into the routine of the very people who invented the word sabotage I went to work on my Big Mac Attack plan.

Many things at the Great Taste Place had to be prepared with great care so as not to arouse, how do you say, suspicion. The shakes had to cause a Sartre-like nausea, but not swift death. The french fries were fried in saltpeter oil to affect a Camus-like fall on all the men of France. And the all-beef patty I replaced with pork, so that when we kill the infidel Jews we can have the satisfaction of knowing that they will go straight to Hell.

But the greatest fun I had was on my many outings with Pierre, a truly noble man of 16. We went to the Louvre, where we painted veils on all the female portraits and circumcised all the male statues. *"Oui oui,"* says Pierre. *Quel comedien, non?* Then we rewired a great number of switches for Le Metro. Did you know that much damage occurs when two trains collide headlong into, how do you say, one another?

We also sawed through many of the metal supports on the Eiffel Tower. Now nothing will remain erect in France.

Pierre was so handsome when he was angry and his anger is the fire in my heart that drove me on to support the Revolution. *Ah, mes souliers nouveaux, je les aime.* I can buy such beautiful shoes on the Champs Elysees. Pierre does not like his fellow countrymen very much. He thinks that they are ugly, weak, arrogant, and pretentious. I think that he is too kind, but many great things have come from France, too. . .Bourdeaux wines, fine fashions, great funnymen like Jerry Lewis. . .and, of course, Pierre, who makes my hot Arabic blood run hotter, who intoxicates my soul with passion, my head with ideas in French, my body with, how do you say, gooseflesh.

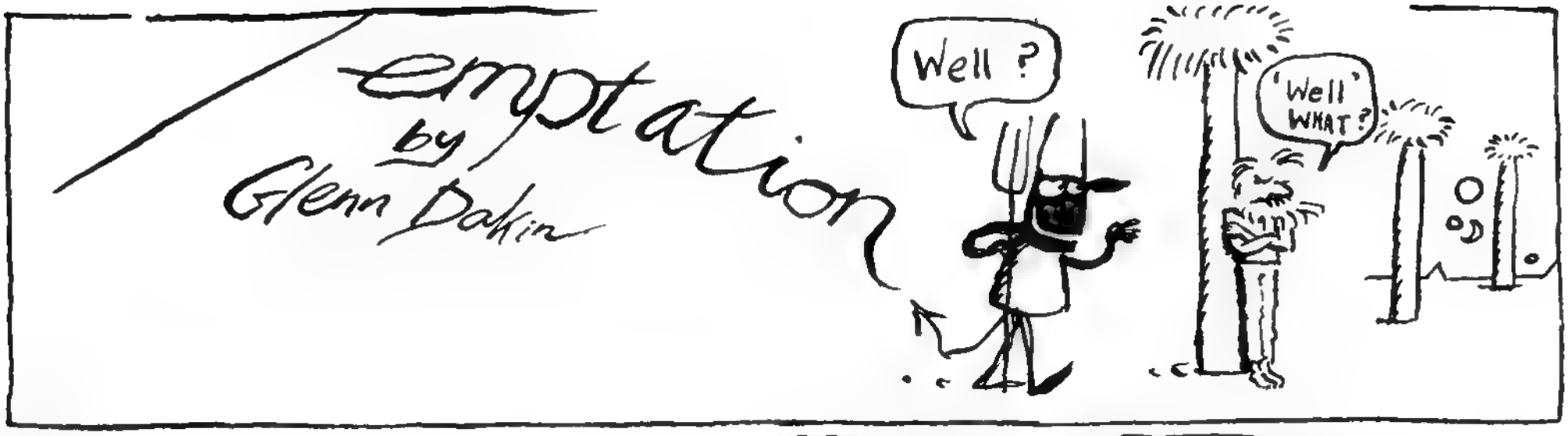
But alas, my summer of love was coming to a very abrupt end. The day that I quit McDonald's was the same day that I discovered that Pierre's favorite movie was "Bedtime for Bonzo." Ah, the shame! I adjusted my plans so that Pierre would order McDonaldland Cookies and a McDLT from me—it was the colliding lettuce and hamburger that detonated the plastic explosives. As I walked away down the scenic boulevard I turned just in time to see the beautiful golden flames arch their way up to kiss the twilight Parisan sky.

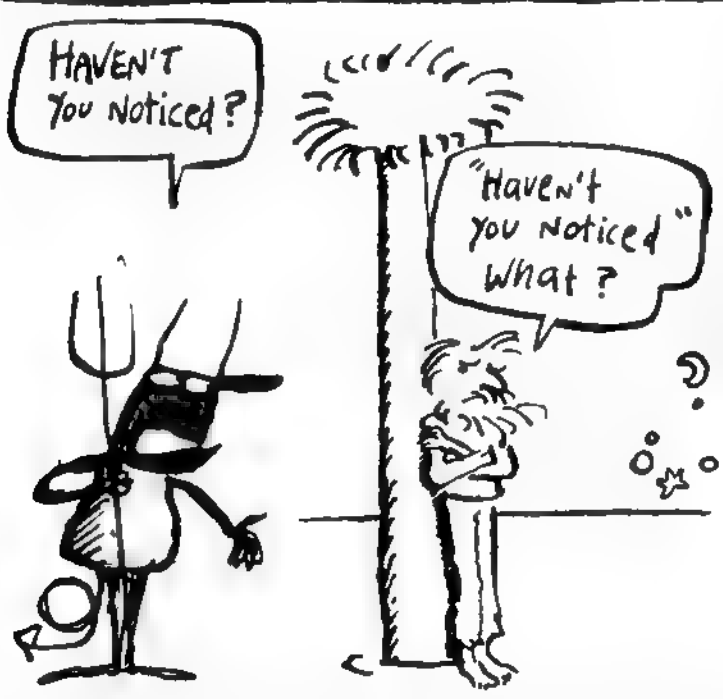
Good-bye, Pierre, Paris! Good-bye, how do you say, conjugation of French verbs. *C'est la terreurisme.*

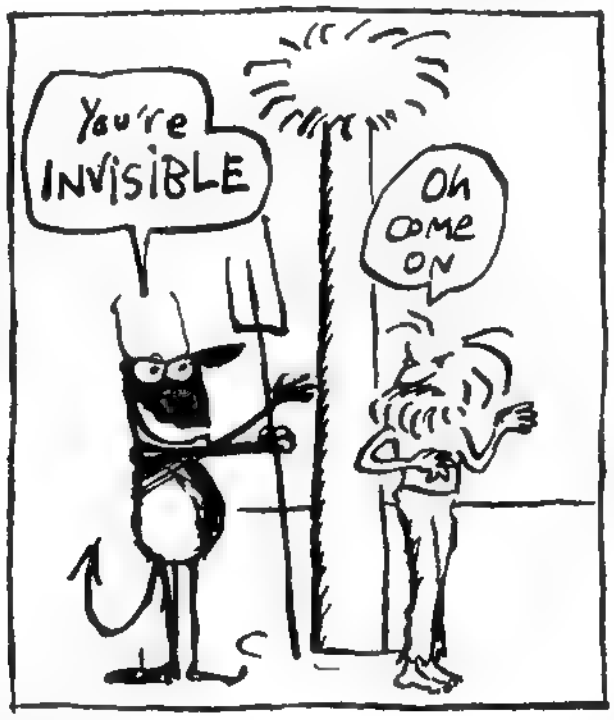
I returned home to country, duty, and an oil rich economy, but my heart along with pieces of Pierre, will always be in Paris.

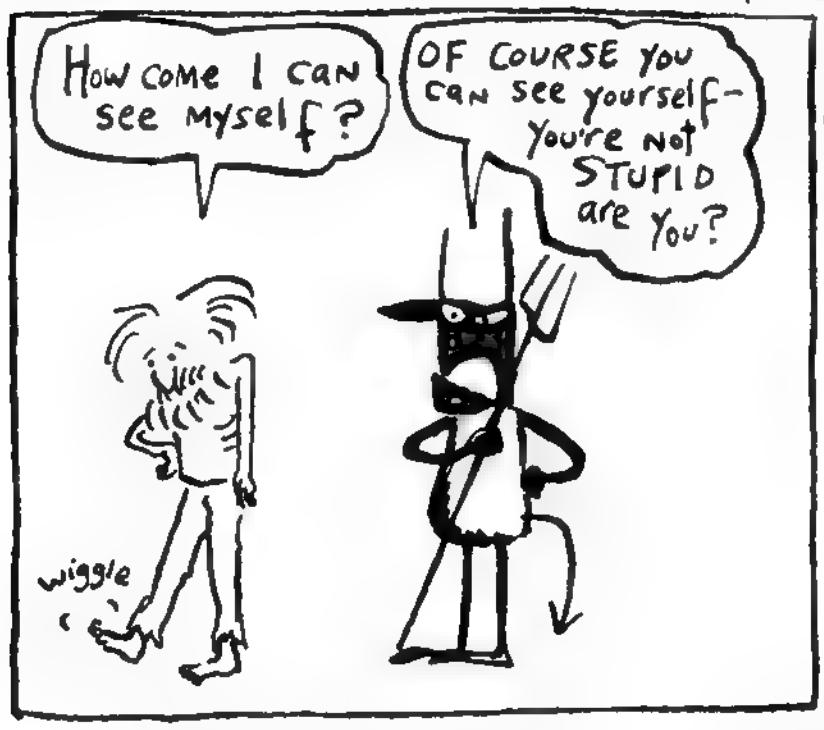
Temptation

by Glenn Dakin









I'm still here
Just imagine- HOW AWFUL to spend Your WHOLE LIFE inVisible- UNSEEN- a mere movement of air, a "whatisit ?" -a Nothing.. awful awful..

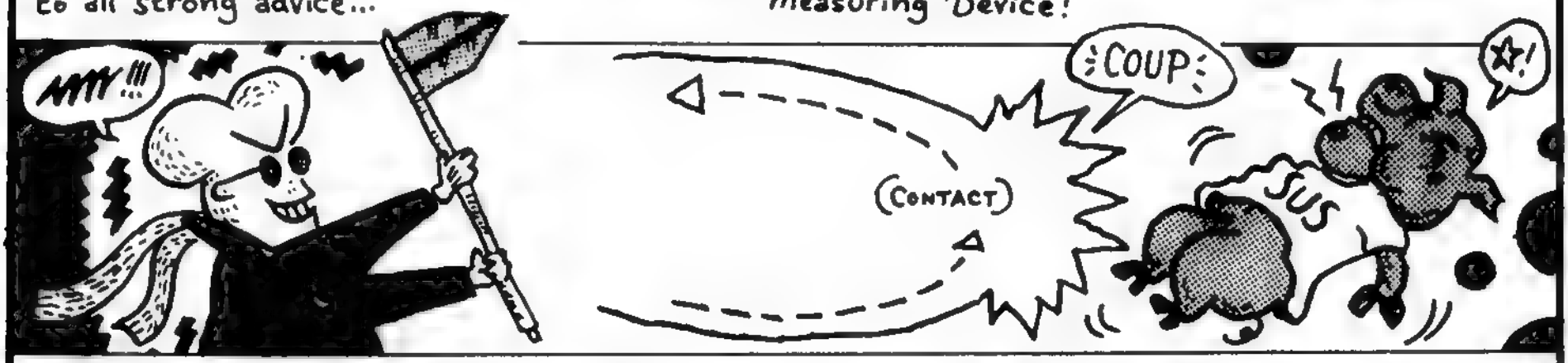
The Ballad of MR OSSAWARY

A BONISH fellow, whose violent traits lead him to fall foul of the Animal's estates!

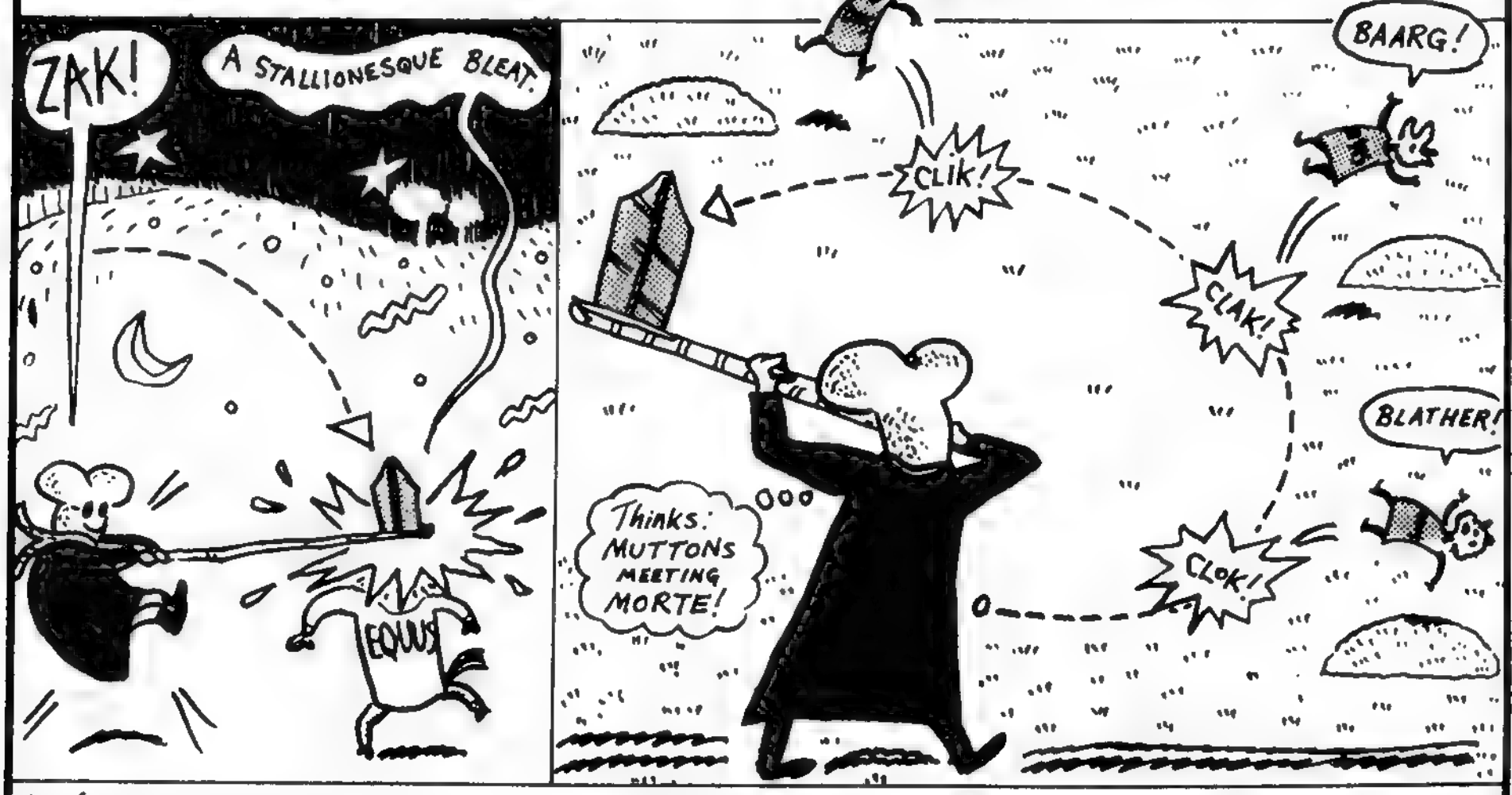
MR OSSAWARY, contrary to all strong advice...

Beat the Farmyard Animals with a Measuring Device!

(THE ANIMALS)



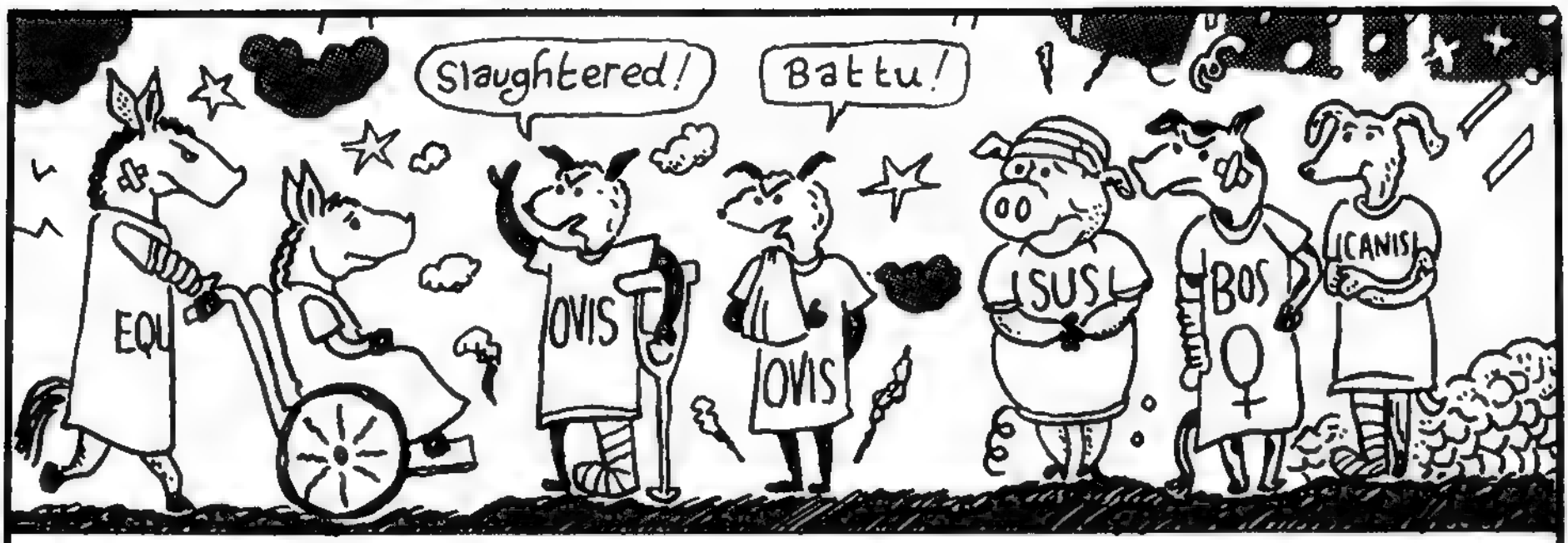
HE beat them in the Afternoon...



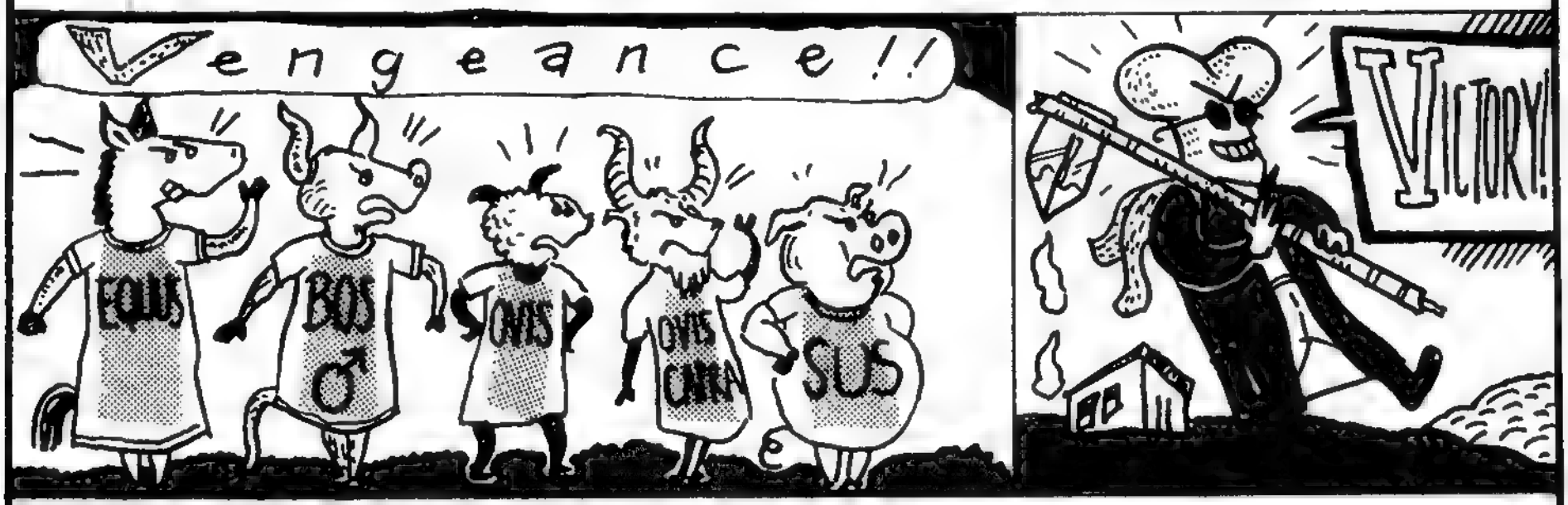
He beat them in the Night...

And gave ample demonstration of his OSSIFYING MIGHT!

©1982 Ed Pinsent



Bulls, Cows, Sheep, goats, pigs and dogs – known by these Latin names–
BOS, OVIS, OVIS CAPRA, SUS and CANIS – were not pleased by these games!



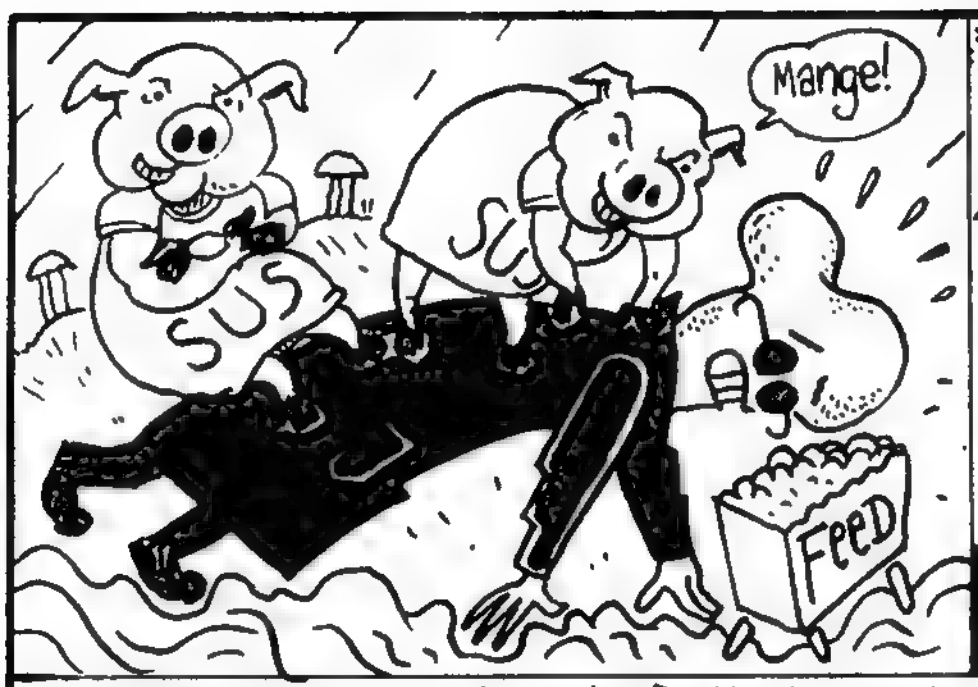
They swore REVENGE upon the Bonish Measuring-Beast,
And vowed that they'd invite him to the ASTRAL BARNYARD FEAST.*

In oblique fashion the Animals do spend their wrath,
By their hooves shall ye know them, on Mr. Ossawary's HEARTH.

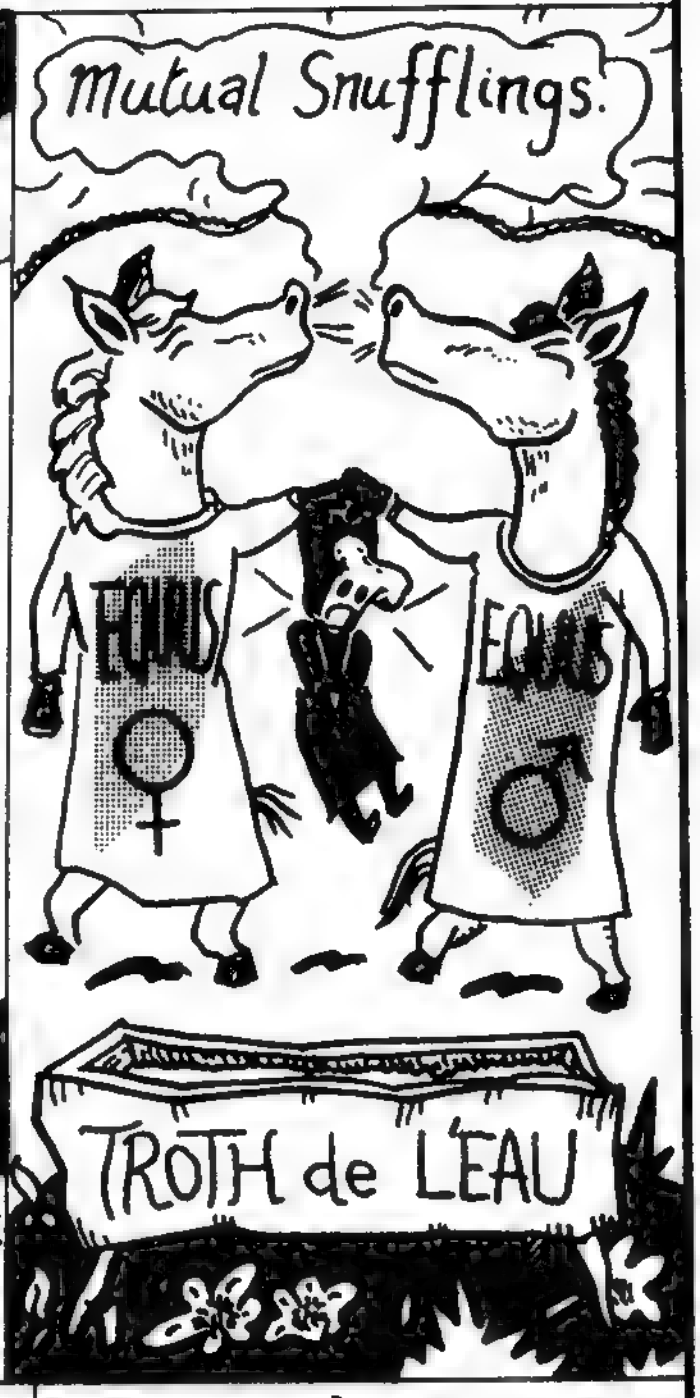
Inside his precious kitchen the Bulls do run amok,
Causing Mr. O to drink his coffee from a cracked crock.

©1982 Pansy Page

* A celestial celebration on the order of the Banquet of ODIN,
In NORSE mythology, where DEAD WARRIORS on their longboats are towed in.

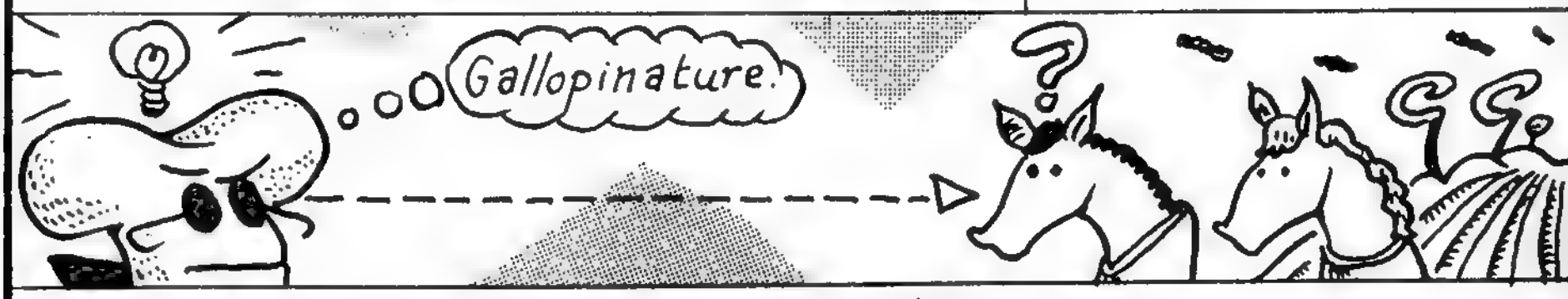


The Sustian PIGS now trundle forth to bend poor Ossawary to their will:
First forcing him to EAT from their trough — then wallow in the swill!



Then HORSES twain give him the sackcloth feed-bag to wear,
Their enemy thus degraded back to the farm they bear.

They lead our friend Ossawary to water, but he will not DRINK—



His plan instead is to mount these Bridled Stallions, I think.

©1986 Ed Pinsent

Bey!

Bach!

Fright!

FIDEL CANIS

(IN QUO EQUITARI POTEST)

But in a trice his designation is foreseen, forespied;
There gallops forth a faithful DOG for him to ride!

Across the Alpine Mountain tops our Bonish man is sped...

...till herds of Alpine SHEEP do gather at his head.

CheeriBLe CLamouR!

OVIS

They have for him a Grotesque Garment of wooL be-knitted,
And now, over his ossified head this robe is be-fitted.

Alas! It is a pullover without a neck besides - nor sleeves nor arms- It binds him side to side ...

©1986 Ed Pinent

AVEUGLE?

MMM

- 30° Angle Trot!

OVIS CAPRA

And also blinds his eyes, he cannot see behind him—
Ten MOUNTAIN GOATS prepare, of Justice hoping to remind him!

Muffled YAWP!!

OVIS CAPRA

(BOOT)

MM

SCORE

OVI

PANE!

CAPRA

CAPRA

Ow

He's rammed into the frosty Mountain Air a Thousand Times - then Pummelled sharply with their Cloven hooves betimes.

(7 Hours have elapsed)

MMMM

Ooo

END

©1986 Ed Pinant

It's in a sorry state our Mr. Ossawary awakes:
Blind, Bruised, Battered, Broken - deep in a Frozen Alpine Lake!

And as he wanders home, his body stiff with Ice,
He promises No More to beat the animals with a measuring-device!

REVIEWS

© 1986 Mattioli

BUCK GODOT—ZAP GUN FOR HIRE by Phil Foglio; 72 pages; $7.95; The Donning Company, 5659 Virginia Beach Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23502.

This "graphic novel" consists of four comics stories, including three reprints of material that Foglio did for *Just Imagine* in the early '80s. The portions that allow this to me to lay claim to "novel" status consist of the fourth and longest story—a 36-page original—and the introductory text piece, obviously written to provide "historical background" for this last story and pave the way for a sequel. This may leave some folks feeling a bit cheated, but it does provide the opportunity to observe the growth of an artist.

Like most fan humor strips, Foglio's creation began life as obvious genre parody—Mickey Spillane in space—and gradually matured through stock plots populated by the implacable hero, hordes of cannon fodder villains, and maybe a coupla babes, to tales told with a degree of individuality and featuring actual characters. From first page to last, *Buck Godot* covers a span of some six years, and does so fairly impressively. While the art style at first seems unchanging—sort of Sergio Aragones out of Vaughn Bode—it subtly evolves into some really impressive detail work and compositions. (Some get a little too impressive, as when Foglio lets his layouts get away from basic comprehension. Word balloon placement also seems to be a problem.) For the most part, though, this remains a high order of "fan art," thus making it a tough recommendation with a $7.95 price tag (though the price is certainly in line with the full-color process and slick paper).

Foglio starts to demonstrate a real science-fiction imagination in the third story, when he leaves behind the booze-jokes and whore-jokes to tell a story and comes up with such concepts as a race of dragon-worm traders who must use spoken punctuation, as though dictating telegrams, and a pair of intelligent, talking laser pistols—a particularly happy invention, wisely carried over into the volume's 36-page finale. This story, involving Buck Godot being shanghaied into pulling one more job for his despised ex-employers, is clearly the reason for the book. It ain't perfect—a scene that tries for pathos and quiet reflection is set amidst hundreds of swirling autumn leaves, in a 25th century spaceport without a tree in sight—but it's a long way from the brawling & blasting shtick where the series and the book began, and it showcases Foglio's winsome charm, his strongest suit as a writer. The plot centers on teleportation, and Foglio's handling of this old s-f chestnut, and his visualization of the kind of being who would practice it, is the best thing in the book and probably the best treatment of the idea since *The Stars My Destination.*

Promised future installments may have an increasing problem with the ostensible center of the work: the main character—a hard-chargin', hard-drinkin', two-fisted, beer-bellied adventurer, who, as the plots get more complex, becomes increasingly unlikely in the role of the brilliantly resourceful intelligence operative he is required to be (while simultaneously remaining dumb enough to allow Foglio convenient and unlikely plotting shortcuts). Having a one-trick pony as your protagonist is not an insurmountable problem, however, as Dave Sim and Alan Moore have already abundantly proven in drastically different ways. If Foglio keeps developing along the line of trajectory evidenced in this first volume, he shouldn't find it difficult to discreetly write around his title character, and no one is likely to miss him much. *—Andrew Christie*

SQEAK THE MOUSE by Mattioli; 48 pp.; $15.95; Catalan Communications, 43 E. 19th Street, New York, NY 10003. Adults only.

Here's something to think about: At this precise instant, even as you're reading this review, someone, somewhere in the world, is being offended by *Squeak The Mouse.*

No lie. This colorful 48-page hardcover from France contains so much explicit sex and blood-and-guts violence that the United States Government felt obliged to spend two days and a whole lot of money trying to keep Squeak and his animal pals out of Reagan's squeaky-clean America.

It didn't work. The jury unanimously cleared Squeak of obscenity charges and the malevolent mouse has been grossing out American comic fans for well over a year now.

So what's all the fuss about? Well, it starts out innocently enough with a six-pager called "The Big Game." Here, Squeak and an unnamed Cat do your basic *Tom & Jerry* riff, as they attack each other with everything from mallets to bowling balls to a stick of dynamite stuffed up the suffering feline's butt.

The twist comes at the end, as the Cat gets his revenge by ripping Squeak's head off his shoulders, smashing his body against a brick wall and sucking on his bones.

But, hey, don't fret. This is cartoon stuff after all, and Squeak makes his way back in "Blood Feast" as a zombie axe-murderer who carves up the Cat's feline friends at a wild party.

Once again, the Cat triumphs, but not for long. His dead cat pals invade his house in "Zombie Night." Still, he manages to hold his own, eventually whipping Zombie-Squeak into a disgusting puree with a blender.

The final battle comes in what is easily the most unsettling of *Squeak's* four tales. In "Magma," Squeak oozes back to interrupt the Cat's five-page-long Triple-X orgy with three buxom kittens. Here, creator Mattioli breaks all the barriers in a story that's guaranteed to make even the most staunch defender of the First Amendment wonder if there maybe isn't a loophole somewhere to prevent this kind of thing.

Which is not to say that *Squeak The Mouse* is necessarily a bad book. In fact, it's pretty well done. Except for sound effects (CHOP!), the stories are virtually wordless, showing Mattioli to be a master of visual storytelling. The references to Walt Disney, Tex Avery, William Hanna & Joseph Barbera, George Romero and Herschell Gordon Lewis are both well-intentioned and well-received. The sex is no more explicit than what's found in Reed Waller's excellent *Omaha the Cat Dancer* (though without that strip's sense of love and devotion both from and toward its characters). The violence is no stronger than some of the stuff that was cranked out by the schlockmeisters working on the EC-ripoffs of the '50s.

Those points aside, *Squeak The Mouse* is still one disturbing funny-book. But maybe that's the whole point. It's been said that the purpose of all Good Art should be to shock and to challenge. That being the case, *Squeak may* be viewed as a biting piece of social satire commenting on our attitudes toward popular culture. But only *if* it was Mattioli's attention to force his readers to *think* about sex and violence rather than being titillated by it.

The alternative, like *Squeak* itself, is not one that many of us will want to face. *—Mike Valerio*

WHO SAYS PARANOIA ISN'T "IN" ANYMORE? by Alexis Gilliland; $7.95; Loompanics Unlimited, P.O. Box 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368

When my brother was about six years old, he decided he wanted to tell a joke. Of course, when you're six, you don't know many jokes, and even if you could remember any you'd heard, you weren't likely to have understood them in the first place. But he liked the idea of jokes. So he made one up. "How do you get a horse out of the bathtub?" he said. "Dunno, we said, how? "Pour him down the syrup!" he replied triumphantly and toddled off, happy to have made his very own joke.

That, I think, pretty much sums up the "fandom" mentality. My brother had an imaginary, internal audience of six-year-old boys rolling in the aisles at his deathless wit. Likewise, outside the arena of science fiction fan publications in which these doodles originally appeared, the artist's jokes are emphatically all his, and his alone.

There's a tin woodsman wearing a lie detector wrist-cuff hooked up to a birdcage with a cat in it, and another tin woodsman with a clipboard says to him "Now if you lie, the cat will fluff its tail and meow!" Then there's these two soldiers in a trench, and one says to the other "How can there be war in space when there ain't no mud in space?" and the other one says "Love will find a way." (That is, one presumes the other soldier says this. It is the artist's conceit, whenever there are two speakers, or one speaker who speaks more than one sentence, to carefully enclose only the first statement in a word balloon; all subsequent dialogue simply floats free in the general vicinity of the illustration.) A clown says "It may be funny, but it *is* the meaning of life," and in free-float, "Stop laughing you fools!" A demon holding cards says "Sure economic rationality is important. So is the club suit." The one-liners that are not squarely in the category of the non-sequiturial are generally vague, disjointed, evidence sexual panic, require a dictionary, or are simply lame.

Gilliland's mantlepiece apparently groans under the weight of fan awards, which can only mean that the audience of wildly appreciative six-year-old boys in his head is really out there, nodding, chortling, and burbling with pleasure.

—Andrew Christie

HUNT EMERSON

By Frank Plowright

I first recall looking at Hunt Emerson's work, rather than just being aware of it, when a store owner thrust a copy of the newly-published Thunderdogs *at me, praising it enthusiastically. Instead of noticing the individual manner in which Hunt Emerson applied the the exaggerated art styles associated with traditional British humor comics to something with greater depth, I remember thinking that I could buy three Marvel comics for the same price, and they were in color as well. I placed* Thunderdogs *back on the shelf when the store owner had his back turned. I'd like to believe that my tastes have broadened in the following years, and there's no doubt that Emerson's skills as a writer and artist have progressed from unique to startling. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you . . . Hunt Emerson.*

—Frank Plowright

FRANK PLOWRIGHT: *Let me start by asking for your artistic influences, because as far as I can tell your style is unique.*

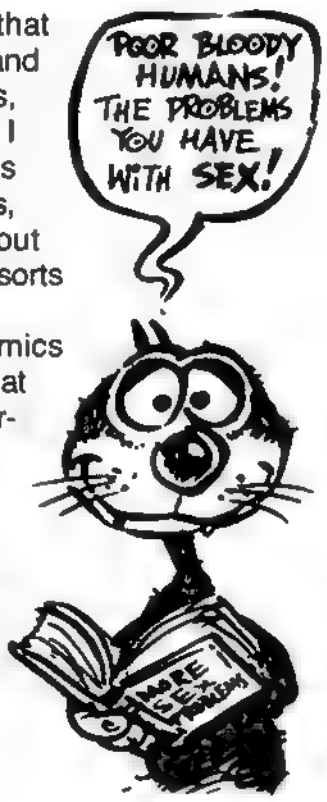
HUNT EMERSON: I've been drawing comics since 1973 so pretty well everything becomes an influence. I was thinking the other day about my childhood, what I could remember of it, and what had influenced me when I'd been very little. I know that I used to draw a little band of grenadiers, a fat man playing the base drum, a thin man playing the trumpet and an ordinary sized man playing the cymbals. This was at about three, and I remember drawing it on the bedroon wallpaper and getting thumped for it. I also remember before I was five that there was an auntie of my mother's who was blind. I was going around the room asking everyone to draw things and I asked her to draw something, not realizing anything about blindness. I think everybody was quite embarrassed by it, but she was quite happy to scribble and asked what I wanted her to draw, and I asked for two goats. I remember her drawing the goats on the grass and seeing how she was making marks for the grass and thinking "Oh yes, grass, hmm,"—well, inasmuch as you think that at five, but I do remember that, the realization that there are ways of drawing things like that. So I suppose you could say that my artistic influences come from the drawings of the blind.

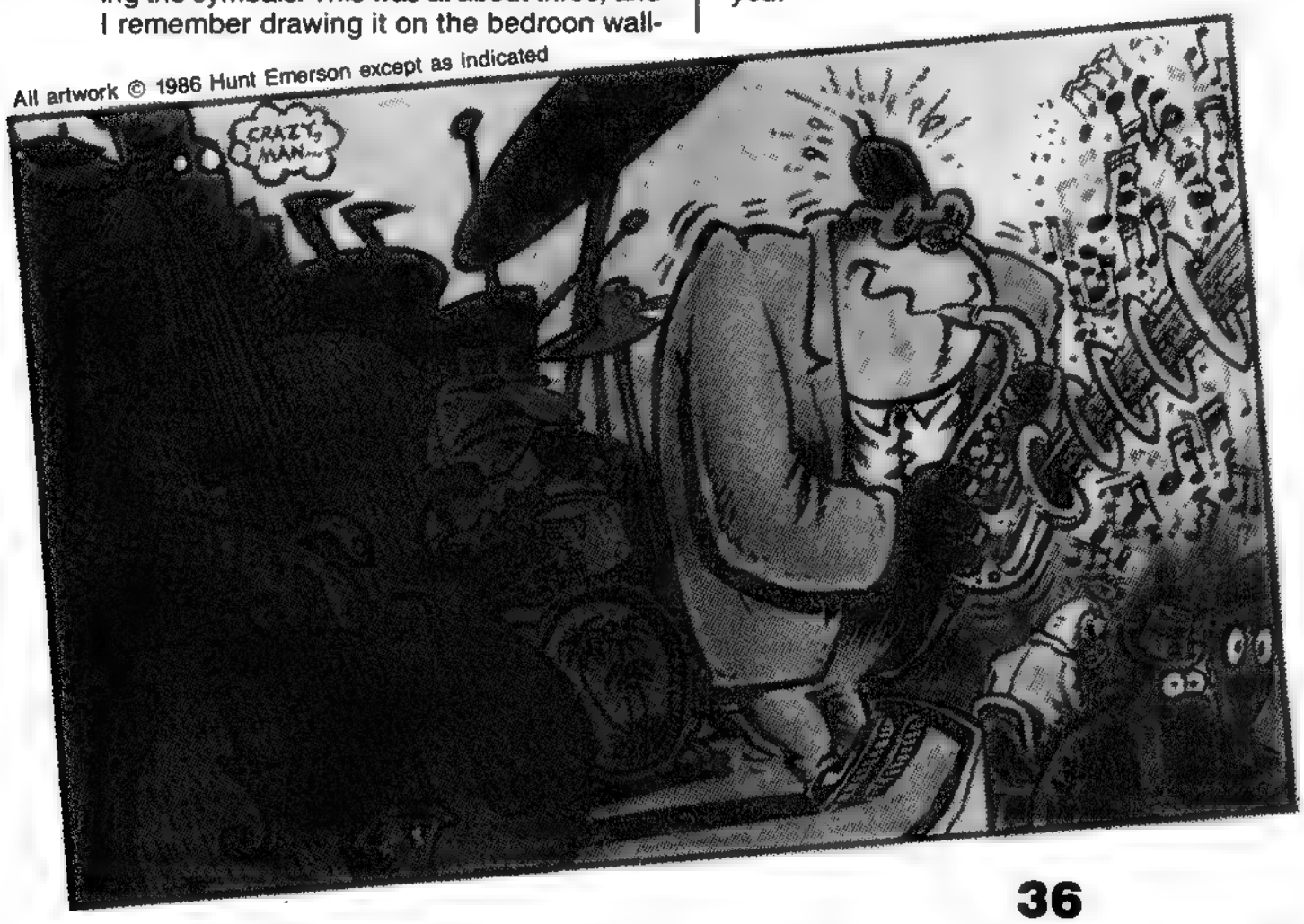
PLOWRIGHT: *That's much better than what I was leading to. I was going to say that when comic artists start they have a style that's usually recognizable as someone else's, from which they develop, and I can't find that with you.*

HUNT: I would disagree with that, but it's probably because I wasn't interested in comics until I started drawing them. I started because I saw the underground comics, in particular *Zap*. And they really impressed me because I'd never realized what you could do with comics. I think that, early on, Crumb was an influence and Rick Griffin as well. I remember looking at his stuff and working out how to do chrome and things. I used to do a lot of chrome. You pick up visual things all the time. Another is Wally Wood from the early *MAD,* which I used to see in Ballantine paperbacks when I was a child. They were wonderful, a big influence, learning how Wally Wood drew bulletholes, craters and upper lips. I picked up details like that and gradually worked them into things. Oh, Herriman as well. The visual influence diversifies as you see more people.

So far as the writing goes, that was very influenced by Crumb and Gilbert Shelton in the early days, and Robert Williams as well. I liked the idea that these comics could be about all sorts of things, though most of them were about dope and sex, although from all sorts of angles.

I started looking at other comics and very quickly figured out that Marvel Comics were all superheroes, and it didn't really matter much which one you were reading. I was attracted by the individuality of artists rather than those who submerged themselves in a corporate identity, which is not to do down the mainstream artists, but it's how I see them in a way.





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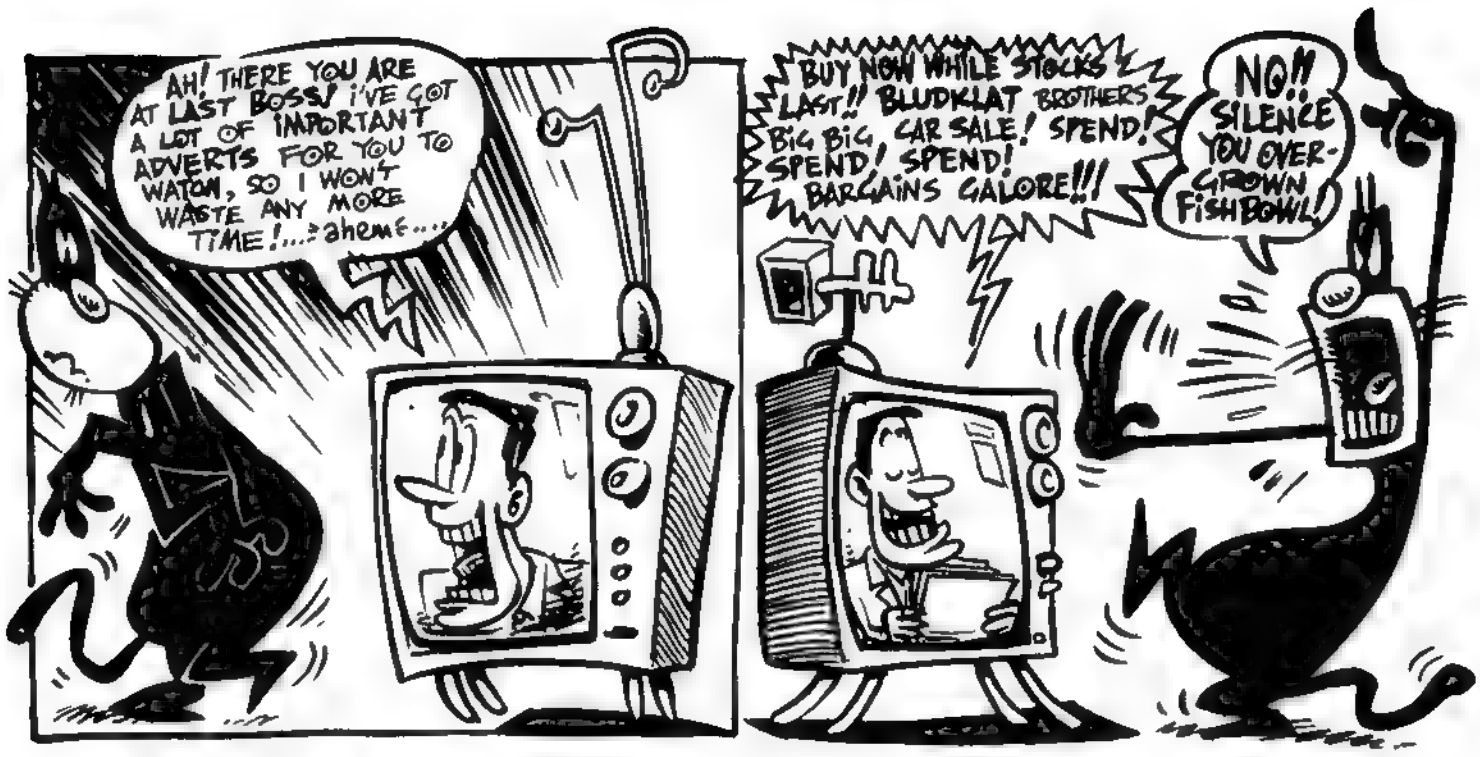
AH! THERE YOU ARE AT LAST BOSS! I'VE GOT A LOT OF IMPORTANT ADVERTS FOR YOU TO WATCH, SO I WON'T WASTE ANY MORE TIME!...ahem....
BUY NOW WHILE STOCKS LAST!! BLUDKLAT BROTHERS BIG BIG CAR SALE! SPEND! SPEND! SPEND! BARGAINS GALORE!!!
NO!! SILENCE YOU OVER-GROWN FISHBOWL!

Calculus Cat vs. his telly.

PLOWRIGHT: *You've always produced humor comics, which isn't the easiest genre to tackle.*
HUNT: It never occurred to me that there was anything else to do. I can't possibly be serious about things. It's only a comic for Christ's sake!
PLOWRIGHT: *I wish I heard that attitude a bit more often. Currently most of your work is centred on four characters, Max Zillion, Calculus Cat, Alan Rabbit (a.k.a. Bill the Bunny) and Firkin.*
HUNT: For a long time I did stuff that didn't have set characters, but you've got to work with them in the end because you need the depth. I've just introduced Alan Rabbit again, but he's always there. It's like my own repertory company. When I need a couple of villains I use Shekel and Shark and when I need an innocent abroad it's Alan Rabbit. If I need mad professors or cranky old men I use a caricature of myself, because it's a lot easier to do than inventing new characters all the time. Why invent villains when I've got them alrady, trot them out and put them in the part.
PLOWRIGHT: *Alan Rabbit is really your only upbeat character.*
HUNT: I suppose so. Max is upbeat, it's the rest of the world that does him down. They tend to talk to themselves a lot, which I suppose makes them downbeat and introverted.
PLOWRIGHT: *That's most apparent with Calculus Cat, who faces the world with an insane grin when he's torn apart inside his house. Why do you use advertisements so aggressively in that strip?*
HUNT: I don't watch much television, so what's happening on the TV in *Calculus* is more of a generalized perception. The humor of the strip is the relationship between Calculus and the television. In real life it doesn't matter what is on the TV, it's all drivel. There's only two divisions: Programs and advertisements. Maybe there's a third if you split the programs into news and others, but for the purposes of Calculus there's only the programs and the ads. Calculus's job is going out and running around with a grin on his face, and the TV's job is to sell him Skweeky Weets, which drives Calculus up the wall.
PLOWRIGHT: *It's a rather depressing view of TV.*
HUNT: Well, it's a mucky medium.
PLOWRIGHT: *It has redeeming qualities.*
HUNT: Where?
PLOWRIGHT: Hill St. Blues, *football,* Hancock. *It does distort events, but you put that over in the strip as well. Regarding Max Zillion and Alter Ego, for someone like myself who's pig ignorant when it comes to jazz it seems to be done with a lot of love for the genre. It's a very expressive strip. Do you have a love of jazz?*
HUNT: No.
PLOWRIGHT: *Oh dear, I'll have to scrap that one. I think it's a very evocative strip, and there are parallels with all the lovely jazz strips that Robert Crumb does.*
HUNT: I don't really like jazz music much. It's okay, I can take a bit, but I'm not all that stuck on it. I prefer rhythm and blues, Howlin' Wolf and James Brown and that sort of thing. The jazz thing is very wide ranging. There are good characters and settings, good language and the bits around it, the suits and the low life aspects of it. Jazz gives the strip a feel. If it were rock and roll, which it could be, then the characters would have to get involved in drugs, groupies, travelling in vans and that sort of thing, which is very boring. The jazz musician is more of a normal person in an abnormal job, and it means I can also put Max back into the '20s and '30s and it's still jazz.
PLOWRIGHT: *You don't seem to be strained by conventional storytelling technique. Stories don't progress in a linear way and characters jump in and out. The humor seems more important than the structure.*
HUNT: Structure has become very important to me recently. The stuff that I did in the past was very off the wall, but more recently I've been paying a lot of attention to getting the stories right and making sure that they have an internal logic to them. They don't have to relate to the real world, but provided everything is in the story for some sort of reason then it's all right. You should start somewhere and let a reader follow it through until the end and know why they're at the end, no matter how it's constructed.

When I get an idea for a starting point, say Max in love when he was younger, I wanted to do Max in love, so you dream up what would happen.
PLOWRIGHT: *Max in love worked out the way you would expect for Max, but if you approached the story from a different way that wasn't consistent with the character, what then?*
HUNT: You mean Max in love and it works out right? It wouldn't be Max then, would it? And anyway, it never does work out right.
PLOWRIGHT: *How do you work with Tym Manley on* Firkin the Cat? *It's unusual to have someone else writing for you.*
HUNT: Well, doing something for *Fiesta* every month is much more of a job, it pays the rent. Tym writes for magazines, he isn't a comic person at all, and he was initially an editor on *Fiesta* in the early '70s.
PLOWRIGHT: *I suppose we'd better explain what* Fiesta *is.*

Firkin.

HOW CAN YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH A FEMALE ARSE?! I MEAN, THEY DON'T TALK NOR NUFFIN...
Women must destroy the patriarchal legal system which suppresses their rights to commit armed robberies in Kensington...
You're absolutely right!
WELL, MOST OF THEM DON'T....

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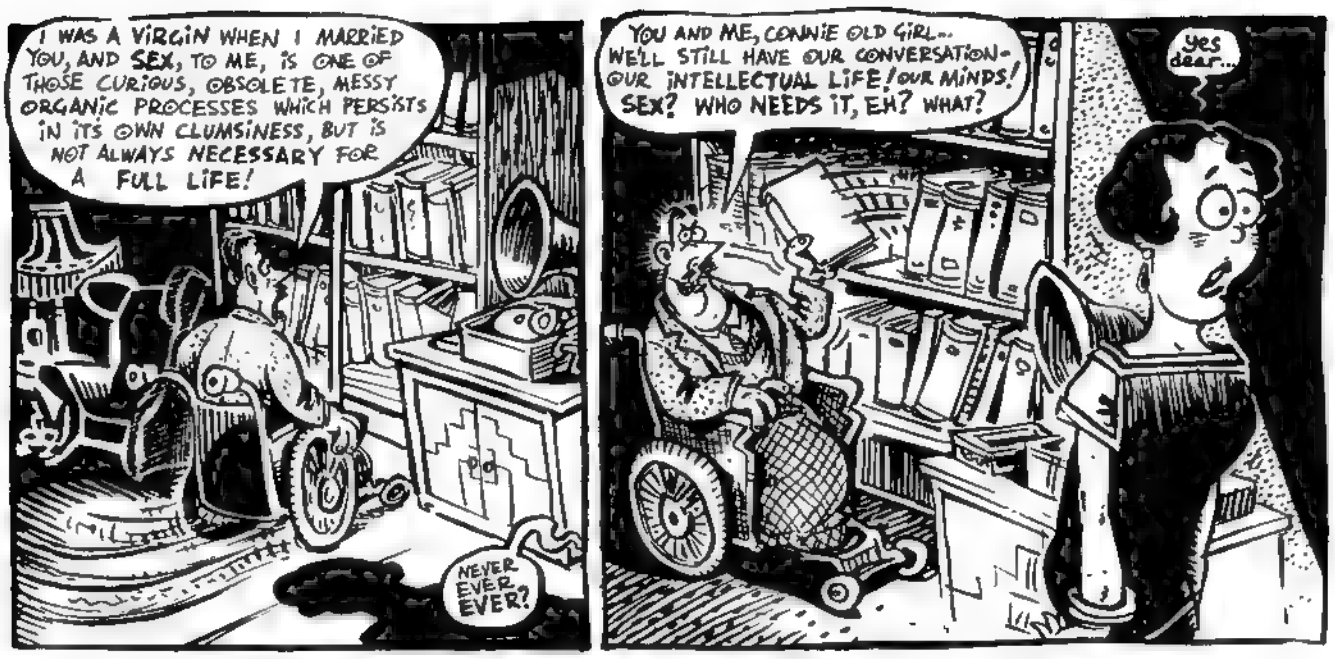
I WAS A VIRGIN WHEN I MARRIED YOU, AND SEX, TO ME, IS ONE OF THOSE CURIOUS, OBSOLETE, MESSY ORGANIC PROCESSES WHICH PERSISTS IN ITS OWN CLUMSINESS, BUT IS NOT ALWAYS NECESSARY FOR A FULL LIFE!
NEVER EVER EVER?
YOU AND ME, CONNIE OLD GIRL.. WE'LL STILL HAVE OUR CONVERSATION- OUR INTELLECTUAL LIFE! OUR MINDS! SEX? WHO NEEDS IT, EH? WHAT?
yes dear...

From *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, due out soon from Knockabout.

HUNT: *Fiesta* is a cheap and cheerful "magazine for men." I think that it's all right, although obviously exploitative, but if these magazines have to be around it's one of the better ones. Tym edited it and introduced the "Readers' Wives" section.

PLOWRIGHT: *They're all fake, aren't they?*

HUNT: You've got to be kidding. Now and again in the early days he would get shots from camera buffs, so Tym started collecting these and eventually managed to persuade the publisher to print them. They printed a few sets that went down very well. Then, about that time Polaroid cameras were invented, and *Fiesta* was flooded with thousands of photos of readers' wives. They've absolutely no need to make them up.

Tym now works freelance and *Fiesta* put him on Firkin when they first mooted the idea.

PLOWRIGHT: *A cat's observation of human sexual foibles is a peculiar idea for a strip.*

HUNT: It enables us to view the whole field of sexual relationships from the outside, using the cynical cat. They're funny and I think they're bordering on the obscene. No, make that rude.

PLOWRIGHT: *It's in the tradition of the British cheeky seaside postcard humor.*

HUNT: They're funny and satirical without being exploitative. Tym sends me a script that's broken into frames in a very rough fashion, and I take it apart and turn it into a comic. Sometimes I change the story quite drastically, and sometimes I take them as they are. Tym's not a prima donna and doesn't mind what I do. We both get paid a decent amount, and Tym's so easy to work with. He gives me the initial push to do a story without my having spend hours thinking up the idea, and it still gives me the chance to go to town.

PLOWRIGHT: *And it pays the rent, which must be very satisfying. Why do you dot all your O's when lettering?*

HUNT: I dunno, it's an affectation. I think I saw some in Herriman and for a long time I said it was a tribute to him as he did it, and then someone pointed out that in fact Herriman doesn't do it, so there was that argument up the spout. Nowadays it just looks right. I have two ways of writing, the way that I write letters and things and the lettering in comics, and each is as natural to me as the other.

PLOWRIGHT: *The British alternative comics scene really took off in the early 1980s, and as you were around a long time before that you're really the grand old man of the scene.*

HUNT: When I started I was too late to get into *Cozmic Comics* (an early '70s British underground comic) and *Oz* and although I knew some of the people who worked for them, I was very much the newcomer. When the new wave comics came along with the punks in 1977 I was already too old—or at least I felt it. I didn't understand punk . . . It's not so much being the grand old man, but being in a little independent corner, That's all. Anyway, I'm only 34, for God's sake!

PLOWRIGHT: *In the late '70s you produced artwork for the Beat, who've now split into General Public and Fine Young Cannibals.*

HUNT: That all died out a long time ago. It was interesting doing that because I had to work in a different style, and then update what I was doing. They didn't like the cartoony stuff.

PLOWRIGHT: *So how come you worked for them?*

HUNT: At the time they became famous I happened to be the only person they knew who could handle a pencil, and they suddenly needed someone to come up with record sleeves, labels and that sort of stuff. It started when they were a local band and I said "Oh, I'll draw you a logo," and suddenly I found myself down at Arista records talking to these high powered A&R people. I hate the rock business, it's nasty to work in.

PLOWRIGHT: *I really liked the Beat sleeve with the outlines of the profiles of the band.*

HUNT: That won awards. Odd, really, 'cos I always thought of it as a very basic Art School-type design.

In real life it doesn't matter what is on the TV, it's all drivel.

PLOWRIGHT: *Talking of awards I read recently that you'd won a comics equivalent of the Palme d'Or.*

HUNT: City Limits awarded it to me. I think this is due to Carol from *Knockabout* on the phone to them. She told them that they have this competition in Switzerland, that I'll be going there and that *Jazz Funnies* has been entered for this equivalent of the Palme d'or. They've taken it down wrongly and awarded me it, which is great because it doesn't matter now whether I win it or not, I've got it in print. It's there in black and white and we can stick it on press releases.

PLOWRIGHT: *The work we've been talking about gets limited distribution in the USA, where you're probably best known for your* Thunderdogs *title published in the late '70s.*

HUNT: I was in the USA in 1978 and I'd drawn about a third of it then. I showed it to Gilbert Shelton who liked it and said that when I finished it he'd publish it. It took me another year or so to finish.

PLOWRIGHT: *It's a military satire.*

HUNT: Just before I started it I was a little in the doldrums and I stopped drawing comics for a while, relaxed, and started making model kits. I had a Ford tri-motor aeroplane and I grafted a tank chassis on the bottom of it, and a hand on top holding the engine. I never finished the kit because I thought "This is fun, I'll draw it." I drew the airplane and started doing a thing from it, and that became *Thunderdogs.* I did a couple of pages in wash, decided they were no good, scrapped them, started again and it went from there. The reason it rambles around is because I started at the beginning and then made it up as I went along. Also, once I started the thing, I realized that I was thinking of Wally Wood's "Black and Blue Hawks" from *MAD,* and so there's a lot of Wally Wood in there and it's dedicated to him.

Thunderdogs.

AND, IN THE THREE-D END OF THINGS....
WHERE ARE WE?
LOOKS TO ME LIKE A DOG FACTORY..
SHH!
..THE BOYZ COME AT LAST FACE TO FACE WITH THEIR FOE!
EVENIN'...

I had a great time doing it. I'm a peaceful sort of chap but I did enjoy drawing tanks and military hardware. It was fun to draw them and send them up at the same time. You were saying would I do any more. . .

PLOWRIGHT: *Would you do any more, Hunt?*

HUNT: The germ of the idea is in my head, but it would take a lot of work as I'd need to write the story a lot better than I did for the first one. I'm not to be doing it at the moment.

PLOWRIGHT: *What are you working on now?*

HUNT: I'm going to be doing a comic book adaptation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* with *Knockabout Comics.* That ought to be out by Christmas.

PLOWRIGHT: *Do you like the book?*

HUNT: I've never read it.

PLOWRIGHT: *I wouldn't recommend it. Is the adaptation along the lines of the Shakespeare comic strips?*

HUNT: No, we're sending it up more than that. I'm finding it very interesting to do, even working with a precise and bits of dialogue. It's great working with real people, getting them to act, putting expressions on their faces and dealing with body movement. It makes me feel like a film director putting the characters through their paces. There will be a '20s feel with a lot of background detail and of course the story happens over a year, so there's an annual cycle. There will be a lot of *Knockabout* humor, and I'm not sticking rigidly to the story. I'm not particularly keen on D.H. Lawrence and his attitudes towards women and the world and he's dreadfully lugubrious in his handling of emotions and relationships, and that's just nonsense, so we won't be going into all that. I think it will be very good.

PLOWRIGHT: *So what would you like to see on your gravestone?*

HUNT: Patsy Kensit.

[Conducted by Frank Plowright at the Birmingham Comic Art Show over a cup of coffee on 1/6/86.]

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Firkin *(1986) Virgin Books, 328 Kensal Road, London W10 5XJ, England.*

Lady Chatterley's Lover*(1986), Knockabout.*

ALAN MOORE'S

MAXWELL The Magic Cat

VOLUME I

ACME PRESS

$4.95 - U.S.

$6.95 - CAN.

written and drawn by Alan Moore

ECLIPSE PRESENTS

DESTROY!!

THE LOUDEST

DESTROY!!

COMIC BOOK IN

DESTROY!!

THE UNIVERSE

DESTROY!!

COMING IN NOVEMBER

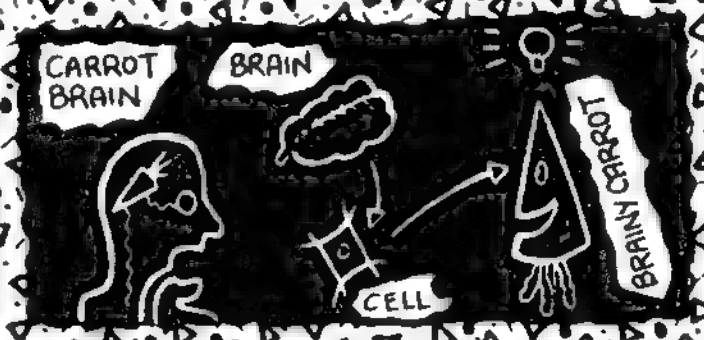
WARNING!

IF YOU WEAR A PACEMAKER
THIS COMIC STRIP USES A MICROWAVE OVEN

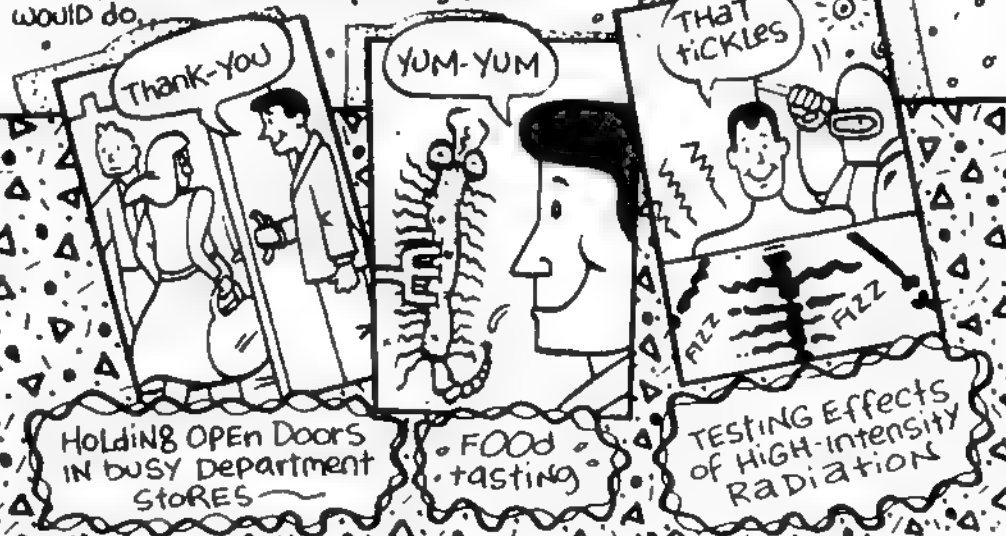
GRANDPA'S STILL PRETTY WEAK AFTER HAVING THE PACEMAKER PUT IN, SO HE'LL BE STAYING WITH US, GET HIM SOME TEA WHILE I RUN TO THE STORE.
SKRTCH SKRTCH
HERE GRAMPS, LET ME WARM YOUR TEA IN THE MICRO-WAVE. IT'S A LOT FASTER THAN BOILING WATER.
BZZZZZZZ DING!
ACK! ACK!
ASLEEP ALL READY! MAN, WHAT A DRAG BEIN' OLD!
BRIAN JAMES RIEDEL 86

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

After major developments in Bio-engineering and micro-surgery it became possible for scientists to transpose human and vegetable cells — resulting in new breeds of reasoning plant and totally subservient human !!



The human vegetables were assigned tasks that no self-respecting person would do.



The new, intelligent vegetables became a welcome sight on and off the dinner table

Conversation pieces

Comedians

As teaching aids -

Charlie © Trumper '84

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

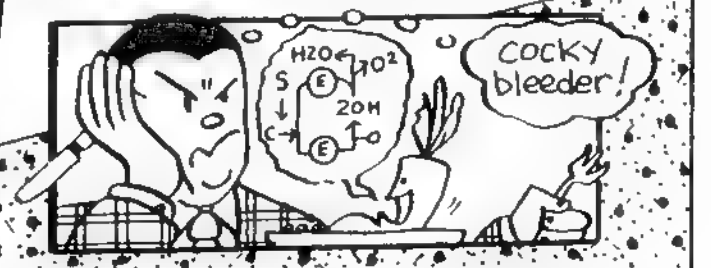
In Secret Research Labs in Kent there had been perfected intelligent, talking vegetables and servile, unthinking humans. This had been achieved by transplanting vegetable brains into humans and vice-versa

However, the human patients began to show signs of rejection..

The uneducated, primitive vegetables that had replaced the reasoning human brain were suddenly aware of, and misusing the power they had over the bodily functions —

with dreadful results!

Meanwhile the clever greens were becoming TOO clever. Prejudices began to breed —



And the vegetables were shunned by society...

Charlie © Trumper 84

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

In his youth the great Prof. Bean invented a matter-transference machine on the principle of the sock in the laundrette.

Beam me up Scotty

POP

RUMBLE

1) Sock is disintegrated in YOUR machine (A)

2) Sock is reintegrated in someone else's machine (B)

The Prof. first used these machines to transfer his own atoms in 1939 -

Centrifugal force harnessed in this way can bring socks back out of the ether.

When the Prof. attempted to project himself further afield he went missing for two weeks

Alas poor Hotlicks, I drunk him like a well!

He turned up in the laundry of the National Shakespeare Company's wardrobe dept.

It is an unknown fact that due to a backstage misunderstanding the Prof. played the part of the Hump in Richard III

A horse! A horse! My kingdom

Stop jumping I'm not a parachute

Fly me I'm Cuthbert

© Charlie Trumper 84

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

Atoms disintegrated

Atoms reintegrated

Prototypes of Prof. Bean's matter-transference machines, adapted from ordinary washing machines

Daily

SCIENTIST MISSING

Manufacture of new machines delayed

The Prof's atoms were first accidentally meshed with a pair of trousers in 1939

In his old age the professor was of a more lewd turn of mind.

Masquerading as a sleeve Prof. Bean unearthed spies in the Foreign Office during World War II

HITLER?

COR

Due to experiments in time-travel that he was conducting not at the same time, he wore himself when he received his Nobel Prize in 1967

IDEA

pencil

OUCH

Thank you

Thank you

gosh, it's all wearing me out

© charlie Trumper 84

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

A POSTBOX IN KILBURN WAS SHOWING SIGNS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR.

CRUNCH!

THE BOFFINS at the SECRET RESEARCH LABS KNOWN as GRAYSON MANOR WERE called in. The SCIENTISTS decided THIS was an IDEAL OPPORTUNITY to TEST a NEW DRUG THAT WOULD SHRINK MEN to the SIZE of WOOD-LICE.....

YOU EXPECT ME TO EAT THIS RUBBISH?!

SHIT!

IT'S STILL in its DEVELOPMENT STAGES.

TO GAIN ACCESS to the POST BOX THEY WERE sealed in an ENVELOPE.

ALRIGHT?

YES, EXCEPT YOU have JUST SQUIDGED Dr. BRONTOSKI with the STAMP.

DONK!

THE 'patient' WAS ANAESTHETISED AND THE SCIENTISTS MAILED in the USUAL WAY.

But once inside the POST-BOX they DISCOVERED it to be EMPTY EXCEPT for a HOLE DRILLED IN THE BOTTOM, leading to a TUNNEL

What's that noise

Hmm! Sounds like a..a.. Runaway Wood-lice

RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE

HEARTY HERNIAS!

BOMPH!

He's BEEN SQUASHED FLAT!

IDEA

the Doc would have been very proud

must get out!!

HA! an EXIT-THAT must be WHERE The LETTERS HAVE GONE! oh, oh....

the effects of the shrinking pill are wearing off!!

LEADING SCIENTIST IN POST MASTER GENERAL'S CHAMBER.

OUR REPORTER Charlie Trumper ©84

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

A CURIOUS RE-SHUFFLING of the MOLECULAR STRUCTURE in SOME HUMANS PROVIDES THEM WITH the UNIQUE ABILITY OF BEING ABLE to STRETCH or MOULD THEIR BODIES... TO ANY SHAPE or SIZE!!

IN the RESEARCH LABS OF GRAYSON MANOR SCIENTISTS HAVE BEEN EXPERIMENTING WITH THESE PLIABLE PEOPLE

WITH the AID OF a PUMP ONE CAN PROVIDE a SUPER SPACE-HOPPER FOR the KIDS and WITH a FRIEND...

ZOOOM

BOUNCE

THE POSSIBILITIES are ENDLESS

For THOSE WITH a RUBBER FETISH.. a STRETCHY HUMAN makes an IDEAL BOY/GIRL FRIEND

I LOVE YOU

SIGH

BENDY BOB becomes the NEW MEMBER OF the LOCAL SKIFFLE GROUP...

DUM DUM DUM DUM DUM

TAP TAP

While RUBBERY RODNEY HELPS OUT IN the GYM

BOING!!

And if RODNEY runs into some TROUBLE ON The WAY HOME He has an IN-BUILT SELF-DEFENCE SYSTEM.

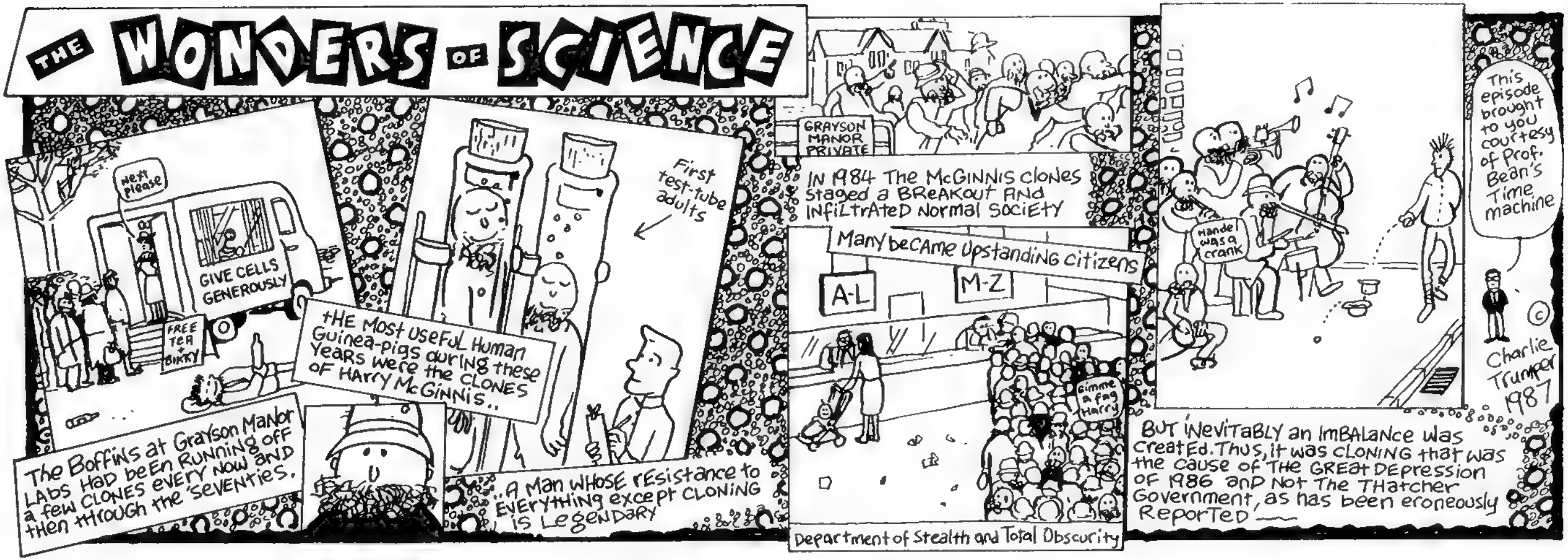
BOOING

RODNEY is also a GREAT HIT WITH the CHICKS

That's JUST STRETCHING things too far!!

Charlie Trumper ©84

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE


Next please
GIVE CELLS GENEROUSLY
FREE TEA + BIKKY
The Boffins at Grayson Manor Labs had been running off a few clones every now and then through the 'seventies.
First test-tube adults
THE Most useful Human Guinea-pigs during these years were the clones of Harry McGinnis..
..A man whose resistance to everything except cloning is legendary
GRAYSON MANOR PRIVATE
IN 1984 The McGINNIS clones staged a BREAKOUT AND INFILTRATED Normal SOCIETY
Many became Upstanding citizens
A-L
M-Z
Gimme a fag Harry
Department of Stealth and Total Obscurity
Handel was a crank
This episode brought to you courtesy of Prof. Bean's Time machine
© Charlie Trumper 1987
BUT INEVITABLY an IMBALANCE was created. Thus, it was CLONING that was the cause of THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF 1986 AND NOT THE THatcher Government, as has been eroneously REPORTED

THE WONDERS OF SCIENCE

PROD
PROD
OZONE LAYER
In the Process of investigating the Earth's ozone Layers, the Great Professor Bean became The FIRST Human being to FLY !!
THIS he achieved by performing a SURGICAL operation on his LUNGS that ENABLED him to breathe helium GAS !!
Scalpel !
Tie-Pin !!
THE TIMES
Identify yourself
Interfering with commercial air-lanes, the prof fell foul of the British Aviation Authorities !!
He got round this Problem by registering himself as a scheduled passenger flight !!
CUTHBERT BEAN AIRL
TWO FLIGHTS DAILY
AFTER a passenger complained to a consumer PROTECTION group about the Lack of CONVENIENCES ON THE FLIGHT, THE prof was obliged To install a lavatory ~ !!
It's a Dodo
©84 Charlie Trumper.

Carol Lay's

GOOD GIRLS

"It had something to do with her hair..."
She's got the job
(love-lorn columnist for
a great metropolitan newspaper).
She's got the friends
(Ultra-Ma, Stupendo Boy).
She's got the costume
(covered with hearts, no less).
But she just can't fly!
She's Monica Saunders.
Ms. Lonelyhearts.
Oh, yeah.
She's got the hair,
too.

Find out why they're good.

ON SALE IN NOVEMBER

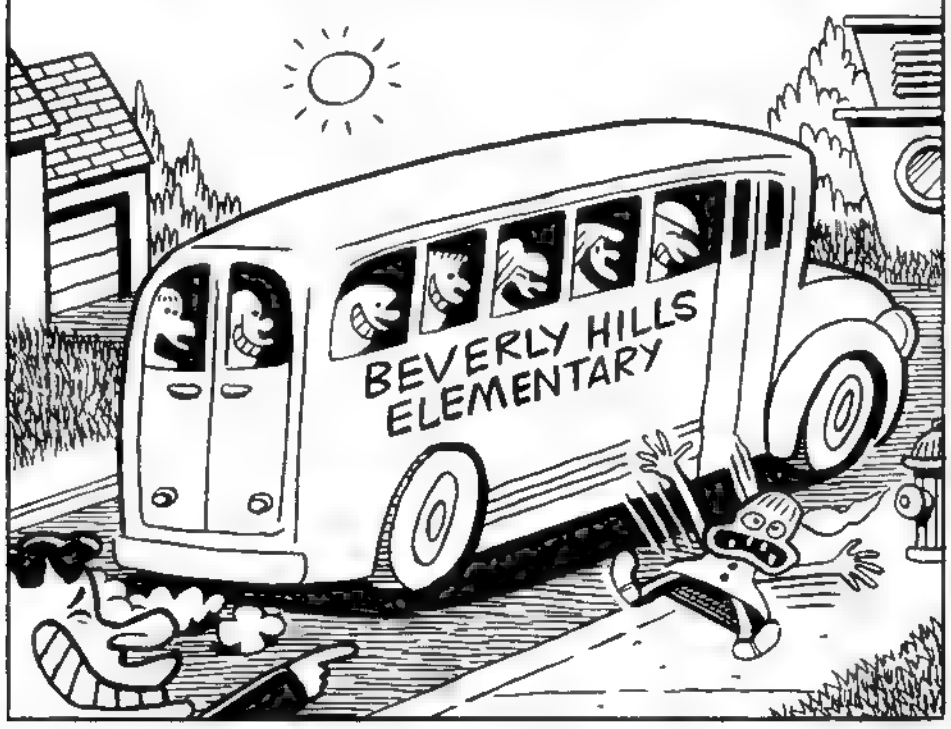
FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

© 1986 Carol Lay

HEY! DIDJA HEAR?!

(or... REMEMBER THOSE FAMOUS FALSE RUMORS?) ©1981 PETER BAGGE & J.D. KING

THAT CINDY BRADY WAS DRAGGED FOR MILES BY A SCHOOL BUS!



AND THAT GREG BRADY BLEW HIS BRAINS OUT AFTER WATCHING BRADY BUNCH RERUNS WHILE ON DRUGS!

THAT EDDIE HASKELL WAS PLAYED BY ALICE COOPER!

THAT "PAUL IS DEAD."

THAT ALONG WITH HER MASSIVE FACE LIFT, BODY LIFT, ELECTROLYSIS ETC. CHER HAD A CROSSED EYE SURGICALLY REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH A GLASS ONE!!

THAT THE ROLLING STONES ARE THE "WORLD'S GREATEST ROCK 'N' ROLL BAND."

CARTOON MAN HAS A SCIENCE-FICTION ADVENTURE!

MY GOD! WHERE'S MY BODY?!

copyright © 1986 Marc Hempel

WOW! THIS IS GREAT!

I'M IN A SCIENCE FICTION STRIP!

NO MORE PSEUDO-INTELLECTUAL REVELATIONS FOR ME!

I'M GONNA GET SOME KICKS IN OUTER SPACE!

THIS IS THE LIFE!

ALIEN MONSTERS!

SPACESHIPS!

FZAK!

WAIT-- WHAT?!

FUNNY LITTLE MEN WITH BIG NOSES!

WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUT HERE? AND HOW CAN YOU BREATHE WITHOUT A HELMET?

EASY!

SHEESH! DIS HAS GOTTA BE DA LOWEST FORM OF "SPACE OPERA" I EVER SEEN!

WE'RE STILL DA SAME OLD INK DRAWINGS ON DA SAME OLD COMIC PAGE! WE DON'T BREATHE --AND EVEN IF WE DID, DERE'D BE NO PROBLEM CUZ DIS AIN'T RILLY OUTTA SPACE!

AW, GEEZ...

LOOK-- IT'S JEST BLACK INK!!

AND DOSE STARS ARE JEST DA WHITE OF DA PAPER...

AW! DOSE PLANETS..

YEAH, OKAY-- WELL, THANKS FOR SPOILING THE ILLUSION FOR ME!

IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH FANTASIZING ONCE IN AWHILE?

CRIPES-- IT'S NOT EASY BEING METAPHYSICAL...

ALL NEW!

AT LAST!

FIRST ISSUE

WORLD'S TOUGHEST COMICS

ECLIPSE COMICS

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WORDS & PICTURES

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LITERATE. INCLUDES WORK BY

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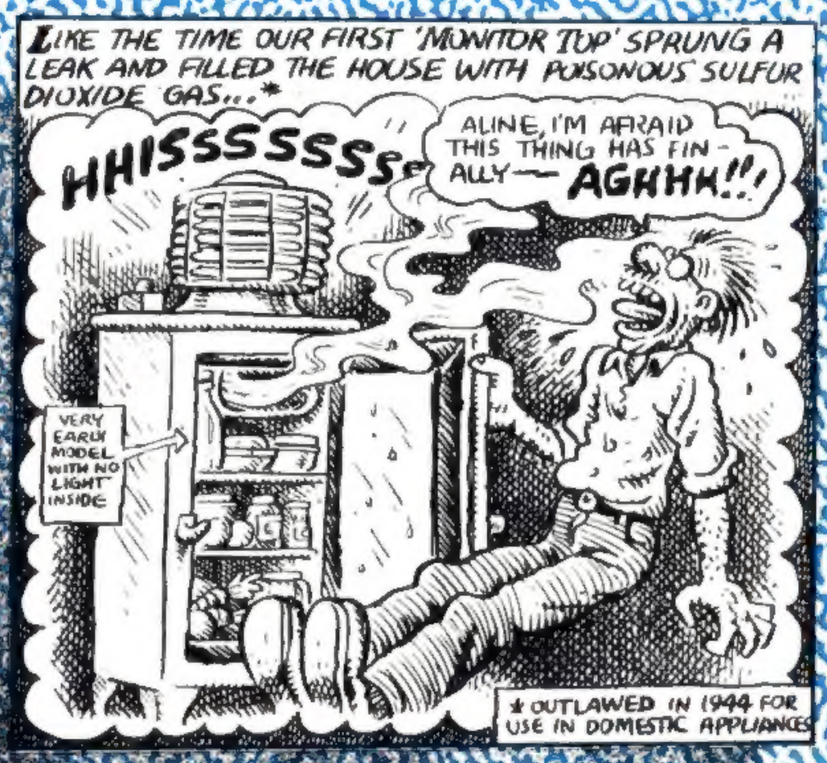
A. STEVENS, SPAIN, CAMPBELL,

ELLIOTT, FRIEDMAN, MANZER,

TOTH, GREEN...FROM THE ONLY

PUBLISHER WHO MATTERS. ■


LIKE THE TIME OUR FIRST 'MONITOR TOP' SPRUNG A LEAK AND FILLED THE HOUSE WITH POISONOUS SULFUR DIOXIDE GAS...*
HHISSSSSSS
ALINE, I'M AFRAID THIS THING HAS FIN-ALLY— AGHHH!!!
VERY EARLY MODEL WITH NO LIGHT INSIDE
* OUTLAWED IN 1944 FOR USE IN DOMESTIC APPLIANCES

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Black & white magazine

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